

NA  
7120  
.02

MY HOUSE  
IS

MY  
CASTLE

BY ALEX. F. OAKLEY

THE LIBRARY  
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY  
PROVO, UTAH



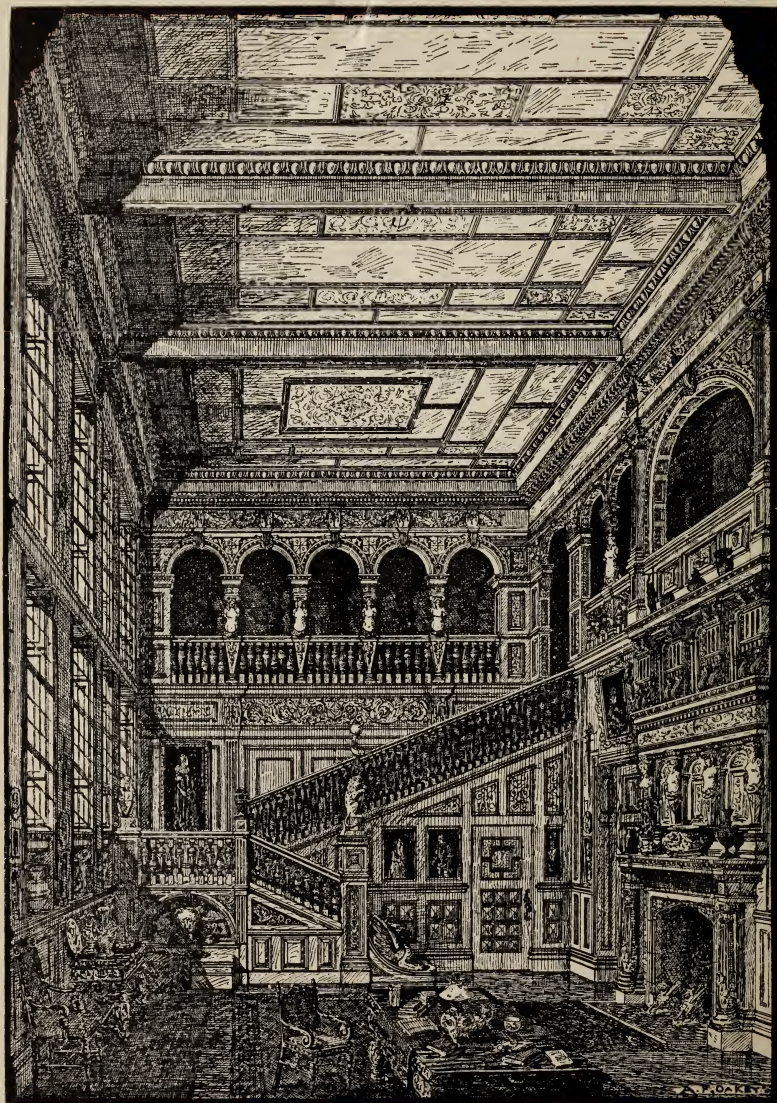






Wm. D. Cunningham

Dec. 28 - 1894.



OAK HALL OF MANSION IN NEW JERSEY

721  
Oa 4m

# "MY HOUSE IS MY CASTLE"

BY

ALEX. F. OAKLEY

Author of: "BUILDING A HOME," "THE ART OF LIFE,"  
"HOME GROUNDS," ETC.

"He that has a house to put 's head in has a good head piece."

PUBLISHED BY

THE PACIFIC STATES

SAVINGS, LOAN AND BUILDING COMPANY

SAN FRANCISCO

1891

PRINTED AND FOR SALE BY THE BANCROFT COMPANY



COPYRIGHT 1891, BY  
THE PACIFIC STATES  
SAVINGS, LOAN AND BUILDING COMPANY

THE LIBRARY  
BRIC  
YOUNG U W BITY  
COLLEGE

## PUBLISHERS' PREFACE

**A**LTHOUGH it is no part of our duty, as a financial institution, to give architectural professional advice, we have felt for some time that it would be greatly to the advantage of our stockholders if we could in some attractive way invite their attention to some practical and artistic considerations which shall increase the value of their investments, while explaining what true economy in building means. To this end we have retained the author of this book in the belief that the public will recognize the sincerity of our intention to serve their best interests, in serving our own, and we feel satisfied that the influence of Mr. Oakey's advice will be felt much more widely than in the three or four hundred homes we annually provide.

PACIFIC STATES SAVINGS, LOAN AND BUILDING CO.

SAN FRANCISCO

Aug., 1891



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2016



# “MY HOUSE IS MY CASTLE”

## CHAPTER I.

THAT IT IS VERY EXPENSIVE to be poor, is an assertion that is not so paradoxical as it may seem ; and to those whose resources are inadequate to becoming their own landlords it is peculiarly applicable, inasmuch as, when a man builds and owns his home, the interest on his investment and the taxes, become a much smaller charge upon his income than the rent of a similar accommodation would be ; because the profit on the investment, actual or prospective, is saved. That this practical inducement to own one's home is more and more generally accepted is evidenced by the increasing number of building associations, both as business enterprises to dispose of and improve unproductive real estate, and as mutual benefit societies.

We have no unimproved real estate to dispose of, but we have a great many readers whose opportunities are unimproved ; who, being comparatively poor, are, nevertheless, paying an annual profit on the home they occupy ; which profit would in itself

soon provide a home of their own, in which the sense of security of tenure is the most essential characteristic of a home. We say nothing of the steady enhancement of value of almost all real estate in a new country, as one of the inducements to owning, at least, one's home ; because all questions of business are no more a part of our present purpose than is inseparable from the cost of building a comfortable house under varying conditions, but especially in California. We believe that a thorough discussion of this question of house-building is not only timely, but that by publishing the necessary drawings to illustrate it, we may be the means of saving many prospective house-holders some of the disappointments that are almost the inevitable accompaniments of first ventures in building, as in all human affairs. Even when a man employs a reputable architect, his own inexperience makes an intelligent explanation of his needs difficult, while it tempts him constantly to interfere with the proper exercise of professional discretion.

We cannot see why a man should be content with anything less than the best thing of the kind he desires obtainable for his money ; because he confidently expects to have much better accommodations before he is much older ; in other words, let us get what comfort and pleasure there may be out of our daily existence. It may seem to many people a matter of indifference on which side of an opening

a door is hung (and we speak of this now merely as a homely instance of what we are saying), but when no judgment has been exercised in hanging the door, it will be found a serious daily inconvenience. It is precisely to insist upon the advantage of spending a little thought and knowledge upon comparatively unimportant details that can so easily render life a compromise, that we have undertaken to make some suggestions that may be of practical value. It is natural that every young community should find it difficult, with increasing stable conditions, to rid itself of the habit of doing things from the temporary pioneer standpoint. And we shall, none of us, in all probability, however prosperous we may become, care as much for any home we may acquire as for the first one we are able to build and call our own. And often a man would be wiser who would alter and add to his old home, even at some sacrifice of money, when he feels the necessity of more and better accommodations than if he embarked upon a new enterprise. He has learned to know just what the old house lacks and if it has been well planned and well built at the start it is capable, like its owner, of playing creditably any role that fortune may insist upon. Even the fact of a house having been born as a one-story building does not prevent it rising to any desired height if its constitution is sound, and, with judicious padding, dressing and coloring may be made to assume as modern and

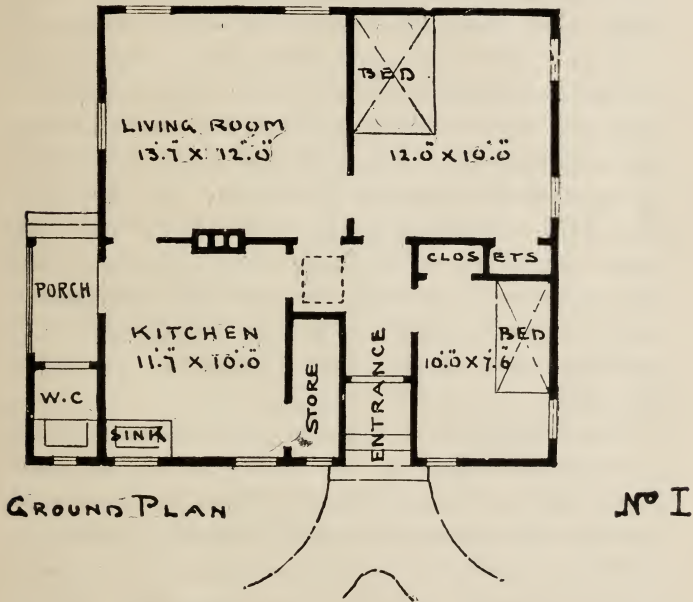


youthful an air as may be desired. On the other hand the essential features of the old house can be preserved, and the new dormers and porches made to appear as the natural sprouting from a still vigorous old trunk.

We want to help our readers to decide what a comfortable house really is, and what it will cost according to the scale of living adopted. And we want to show that because a man can afford only a \$1000 cottage, it does not follow that he must content himself with an ill-contrived hut, nor with an equally hideous and flimsy pretense for a larger and better house. The plan of a house, by which we mean, the arrangement of the floor space in the various rooms, showing the position of doors, windows, fire-places, etc., is the skeleton—and upon these bones all that can be done depends. A good plan is then the first question, and a good plan is one in which the space at command is so subdivided and arranged as to realize at once the most economical and effective accommodation possible.

As a matter of economy an exactly square house is the cheapest, because a square incloses a larger area than any other rectangular form with a given length of wall, for instance : a house 25 ft. square measures 100 ft. all round and incloses 625 sq. ft. ; while if the house were 32x18 ft. the length of wall would be the same but the inclosed area would be 576 sq. ft.

The accompanying sketches, No. 1, of a cottage 25 ft. sq., have necessarily little pretention to anything beyond a comfortable house on the smallest scale consistent with comfortable living for a family of three or four persons; even five might find



lodgment without inconvenience, if the fifth were young and small enough. It will be noticed that the difference between this plan and that of a larger and more pretentious house is merely one of the number and dimensions of rooms, for the plan

includes the closets and conveniences essential to decent living under one roof. The usual custom of placing outhouses at a distance from the main building is not essential to health if proper precautions are taken in the matter of drainage where the waste is disposed of by drainage, or, of daily care, where the most primitive methods cannot be avoided. This daily care amounts to merely ten minutes' time and a few shovelfuls of dry earth or sand, and once a month an hour's labor with a spade and wheelbarrow. The most important precaution is to prevent the natural drainage in the surrounding earth communicating in any way with the water supply upon which the family depends, and this objection can always be met by locating the well, or cistern, in such a relative position that the natural strata of the ground dip in the right direction.

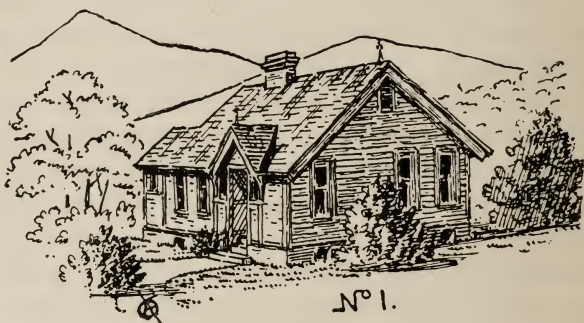
This cottage, No. 1, could be built with or without a cellar according to the necessity of the case. Undoubtedly a house without a cellar, and a properly drained one, is sooner or later unhealthful, however carefully ventilated the space under the first floor may be, because the moisture inevitably carried under the building by natural drainage is never thoroughly evaporated and the area covered by the house becomes more and more saturated. This consideration is perhaps of less importance in such climates as that of the Pacific Coast where a pretty



thorough drying of everything is accomplished during the season of drought. A cellar on the other hand, that is not properly constructed so as to be thoroughly dry is worse than none, as a matter of health; becoming merely a chamber for miasmatic vapor to supply a family sleeping above with a great variety of disorders according to their aptitudes.

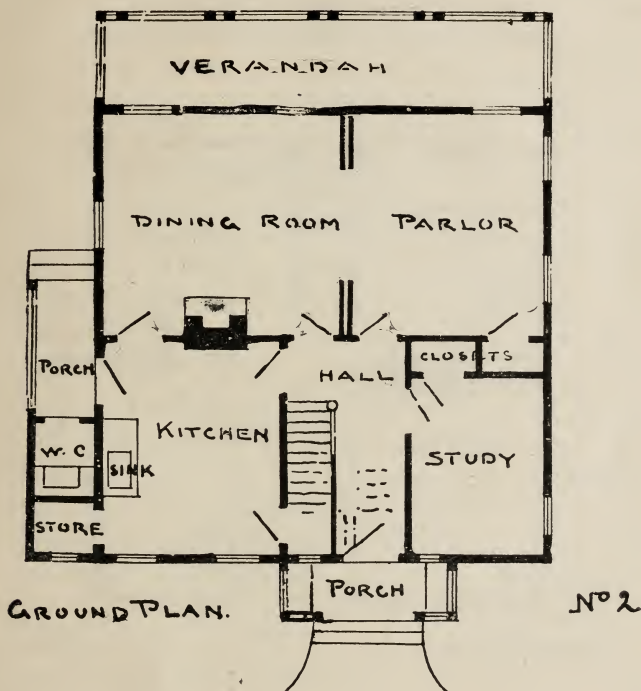
This cottage, No. 1, could be built without a cellar in the usual flimsy manner for less than \$700, but properly constructed should cost about \$950 varying with the facilities for building operations afforded by the neighborhood. What we mean by proper construction is not only a stout, well-braced frame upon a sure foundation, but that this frame should be inclosed with rough  $\frac{7}{8}$  boarding and good building paper to receive the rustic or shingle external sheathing which it is the habit in cheap structures to put directly upon the frame. The interior partitions should also have proper bearing and act as strengtheners of the whole frame. A thoroughly good job of plastering is an important item in the comfort, as well as in the finish of a house, and should last after the first inevitable cracking has been well repaired as long as the house itself. The cost of a concreted cellar and the stair leading to it, for this cottage should not in any locality exceed \$500, and in some neighborhoods, owing partly to the nature

of the ground and partly to the building facility, could be had for \$250. The accompanying sketch of the exterior is the simplest that can be devised ; hardly any concession beyond a shelterhood over the entrance or a bracket or two being made to ornate considerations, but let us see what can still be done on this basis if the owner should decide to add a second story, a veranda and a porch at a cost of, say \$850 more. This improvement would result



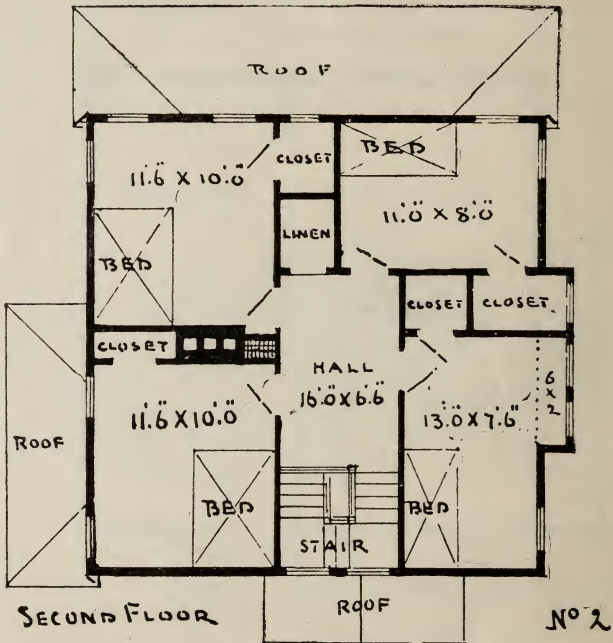
in plans and exterior, No. 2, in which it will be seen that some sacrifice has been cheerfully made to the amenities of existence, and where before, our householder contented himself with little more than shelter “from the weeping clouds and waste from churlish Winter’s tyranny” he now begins to expand to something of the importance of a country gentleman.

The ground plan is still the same with the exception of a change in the position of the storeroom or cook's pantry; the space it formerly occupied being used for the stairway up to second floor and down to



the cellar. The bedrooms become a parlor and study respectively, and a few inches (5) are taken from the length of the dining-room to make the double partition for sliding doors between the two rooms. These

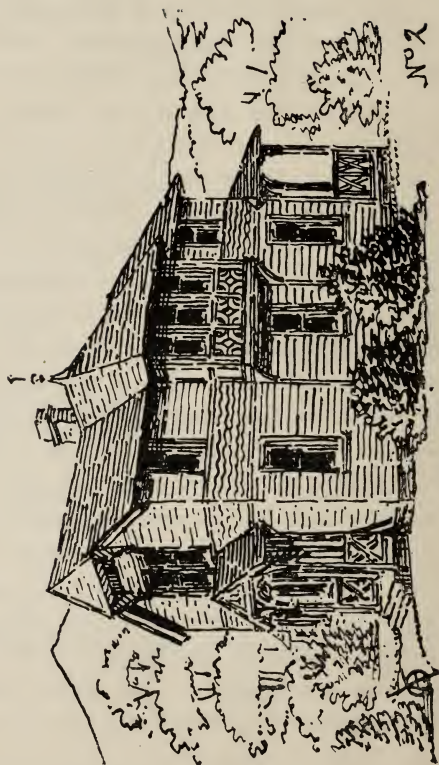
changes, though apparently trifling as shown on the diagram, have really changed a cottage into a house. For not the least important, as a matter of effect, is the introduction of the stairway, with the windows



on the landing above on the second floor. We now have very comfortable accommodations for at least six persons, with large, well-lighted closets. If necessary, one more single bedroom could be fitted in

at the sacrifice of some closet room, and a very little contraction of the two existing single rooms—but for most families the closets would be preferable. There is, in this way, ample room for a bathroom ; but we have not considered any appropriation for plumbing beyond the sink in the kitchen with its necessary supply and waste. We began on a basis of \$950, and by adding a cellar, a verandah, and porch, and a second story, have now reached a cost of \$2,200. And the plumbing and fixtures for the usual wash-trays, for laundry work and bathroom, if properly executed, would add at least \$250, including a boiler, properly connected with the kitchen range. Without an ample and steady supply of water, the best plumbing is a questionable advantage, and in country neighborhoods when there are no properly constructed sewers, the question of how best to dispose of the waste is often a vexation and disappointment. There are many well-known methods and appliances involving specially constructed cesspools, tanks, receivers and accompanying pumping apparatus, all requiring special attention and being advantageous or not in each instance, according to the requirements and the conditions. The main question as regards the house is, to get well rid of the waste with no back draft, or syphonage of sewer gas into the building, and the usual traps below each fixture, together with ventilation carried above the roof are often insufficient to insure absolute safety.

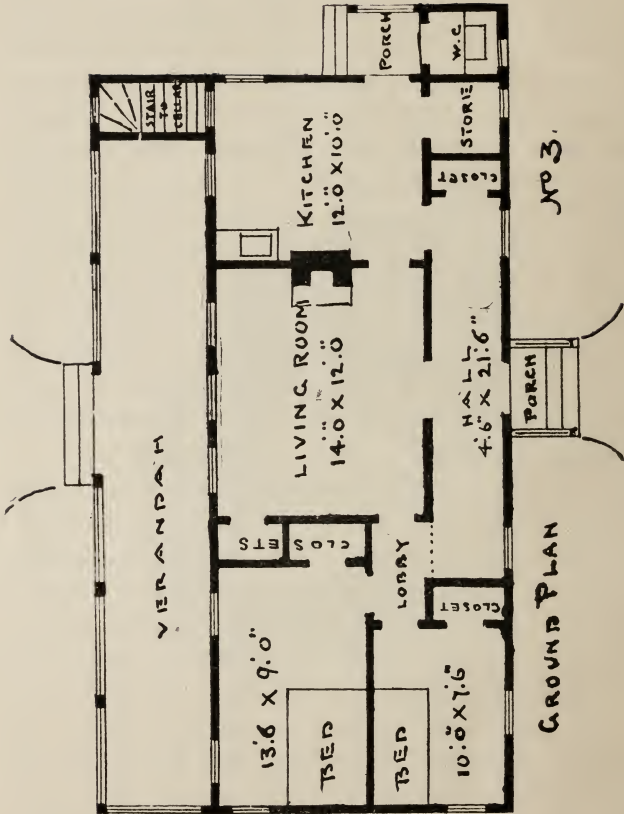




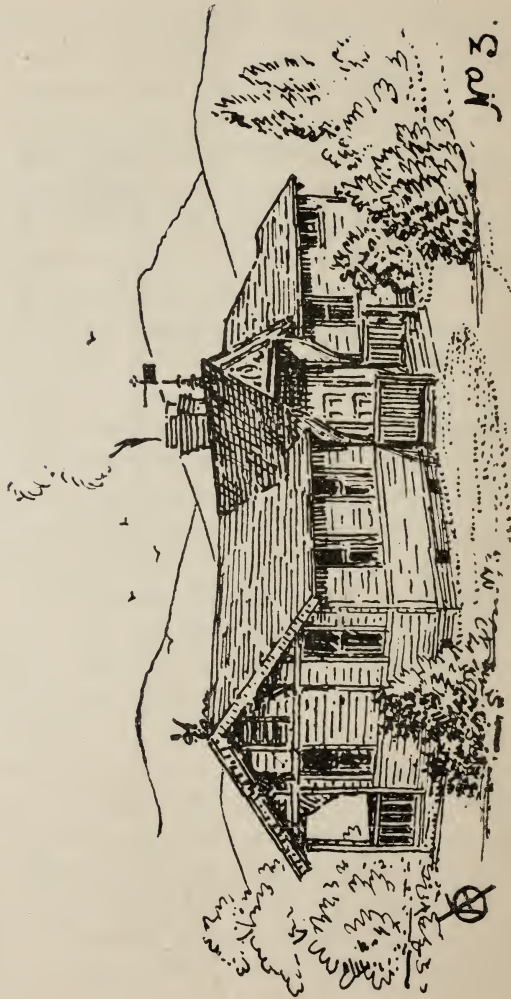
No 2

The exterior of No. 2 is still somewhat primitive, but it is at least the honest result of an economical plan, and we do not think that ornaments would improve it. The country is full of houses bedecked with all sorts of cheap mill work, while the essential features that constitute a permanent house and home have been more or less neglected. The chimney stack in both No. 1 and No. 2 is shown somewhat larger than is absolutely necessary; but an extra flue is often a very convenient thing; as, for instance, in building a second story on No. 1 and producing No. 2. We have only to build up our chimney on what exists to provide a flue for the second story, and if this was unnecessary a ventilating flue from the kitchen would be an obvious advantage in itself.

As an alternative arrangement for a one-story cottage, No. 3 (though not quite so cheap as No. 1) presents some attractions; it offers the same accommodations in a more picturesque form and would be better suited for some localities. The plan and exterior require no special explanation as almost all we have already said is applicable. The cost would be at most \$1,850, with a good cellar, and \$2,100 if the usual plumbing were added, though this would necessitate some slight changes in the plan, viz.: lengthening the back porch to include the storeroom and using the storeroom and hall closet for bathroom.



The height of ceilings in these houses is intended to be 9 feet, which is ample for the size of the rooms ; It should be remembered that any increase in the height of a ceiling has the effect of apparently diminishing the size of the room. Generally, as in these instances, some compromise between the best proportion for the larger and the smaller rooms can be determined that will serve, and, at the same time, in a two-story house facilitate the problem of reaching the second story by an easy stairway. The simplest rule for determining the proper proportional height for the ceiling of any room is: half the width added to the square root of the length, thus : In a room 15x25 feet we have 7.6 added to 5 equals 12.6 ; and if the adjacent rooms are larger or smaller some slight increase or reduction will effect the necessary compromise to bring the ceilings to a level. When the means at command admit of the refinement of moulded cornices (which is entirely out of the question in these small houses), the compromise may be concealed by the character and disposition of the cornices; the more cornices is on the wall and the less on the ceiling, the lower the room will appear to be; and this effect can be increased to almost any extent by placing the cornice entirely on the wall below the ceiling line, and coving the ceiling down to it. On the other hand, the more cornice is on the ceiling and the less on the wall the higher the room will appear to be. This effect can be in-

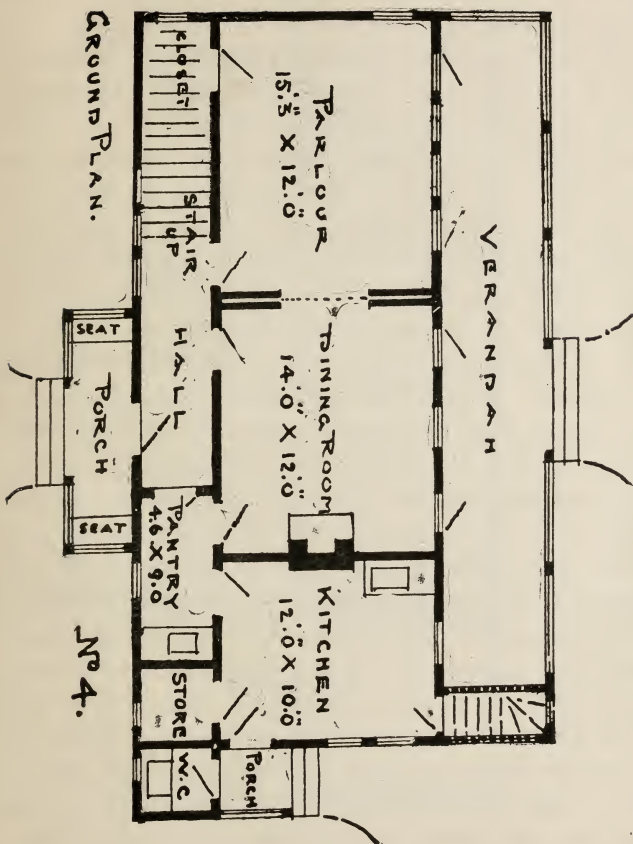




creased as may be desirable, by the same means explained above reversed, i. e., placing the cornice on the ceiling inside the line of walls and coving the walls out to it. When we have built up No. 3 into a two-story house we have something to say about stairways and several other matters of equal importance, each of which could be made the subject of a volume, but we are not pretending more than a few reminders and suggestions.

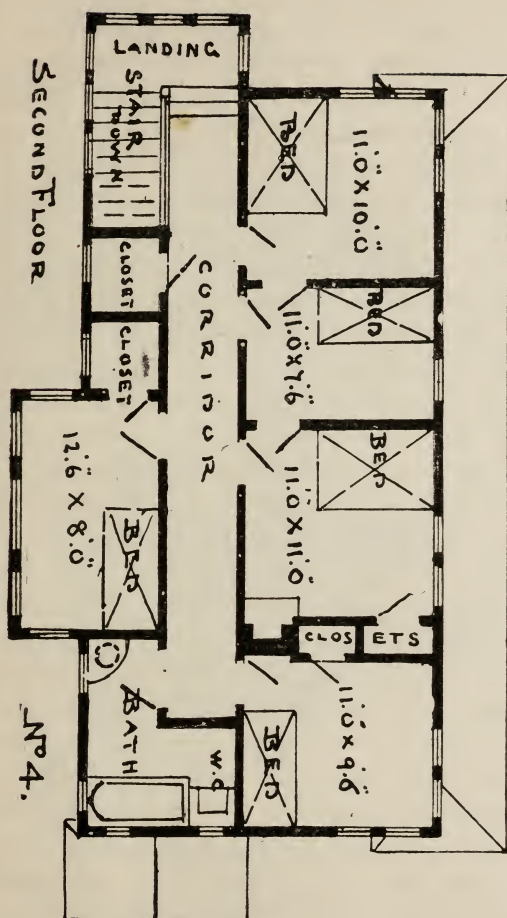
## CHAPTER II.

IT HAS BECOME almost a national peculiarity among us Americans to move about from place to place, not only as the dictates of business interest may compel, from one community to another, but from house to house, in the same community; and while we fully appreciate the innumerable conditions that may force people to such a nomadic life, the necessity or desire for larger or better accommodation to meet the requirements of a growing family or fortune, or both, cannot always be accounted a sufficient excuse for ignoring the advantages of early associations, especially when a little ingenuity can insure the advantages sought for without the sacrifice of that part of one's identity derived from a particular spot of ground. Every house can be, and we think ought to be, planned with some appreciation of the idea we have tried to express; and the suggestions made by the accompanying illustrations have been selected partly on this ground. We have shown something of this capacity for expansion in the growth of No. 1 to No.



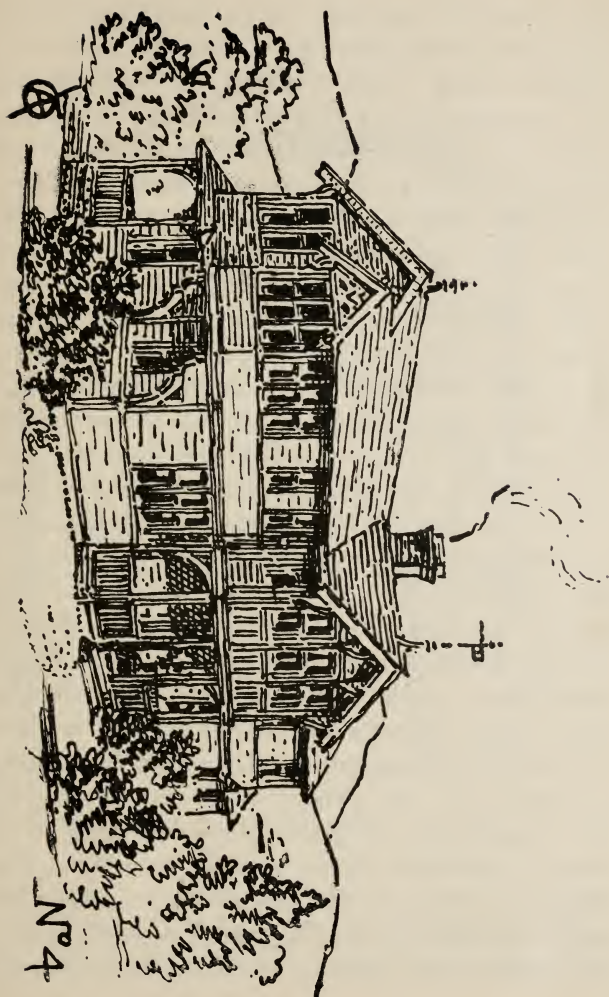
2, and in like manner No. 4 is an attempt to build up No. 3 from a mere cottage to a house of more than average accommodation and pretension. It will be noticed how few and simple the changes on the ground plan are, because the cottage was planned with the probability of expansion in view. A wider hall would, undoubtedly, be better in many respects, and this would be accomplished by including the front porch in the building, a porch, if necessary, being added in front. Of course this would increase the cost to the degree of some two hundred dollars, the house as it stands representing an outlay of about \$3,000, including the cellar and plumbing complete. It must be understood that the cost of any house largely depends upon the scale of finish adopted, and the figures we have given as well as any estimates we shall make as we proceed to discuss other and more expensive houses, are intended to cover only thoroughly good work and materials, designed in the usual styles of mill work for houses of the class under discussion. Unusual things are always more expensive than such as are in constant demand, even when much simpler, for obvious business reasons. There are certain sizes of doors and windows manufactured by the thousand, just as there are certain sizes of window glass, locks, and all the items that are included in the "bill of quantities" incident to any building operation; and any variation from these established figures involves a special





manipulation, representing time and thought, which must be added to the regular price. These commercial regulations, which are in most instances an immense advantage to the purchaser, in bringing within reach a thousand things his grandfather had to do without, are in some cases applied to the production of things whose reason for existence is gradually but surely destroyed by them. This is especially true of the fireplace, which the manufacturers have at last reduced to a mere hole in the wall, often used as the opening for a register from the furnace, but still serving as an excuse for a piece of fixed furniture called a mantel, which is manufactured, like all the other appurtenances, by the thousand. It must be admitted that this repetition from house to house, not only of our locks and door knobs, but of the features that constitute the individuality of a home, is carrying the influence of machinery into our very vitals, and makes it more and more a matter of indifference in what house we shall live. We know in advance the sort of interior we must expect when the rent is stated, and if the house is let furnished we know what the manufacturer has provided in that respect as well. We would not be understood to underrate the comfort and convenience assured to the slenderest means by all modern inventions, but we do not wish to see individual charm to home surroundings swept away by them.

Speaking of furniture reminds us that in planning



any house it is essential to bear in mind the necessary pieces of furniture that must be used in each apartment and to see to it that our doors and windows are determined with reference to the furniture spaces. It will be seen that in all the accompanying plans the beds are indicated in each bedroom in what we believe to be the most convenient position where there is a choice of positions. A double bed is usually 4 ft. 6 in. wide by 6 ft. 6 in. long, and a single bed the same length by 3 ft. wide, so that it is easy to determine what floor space remains for other uses. It should be remembered also that the position of the bed must determine the swinging of the doors into the passage that the door may act as a screen from the passage, or hall for the occupant of the bed, even when the door is wide open, and in this connection we would say that in general the doors opening into the common rooms of a house, such as the parlor, dining-room or library should be hung so as to expose as much of the room as possible, even when partially closed; while the bedroom doors should be hung with the opposite idea. It will be found an advantage, also, to hang a door between a dining-room and pantry so as to close the vista into the kitchen beyond. The disregard of this simple expedient often obliges fastidious housekeepers to set up a movable screen to do the work easily accomplished by the pantry door without loss of valuable floor space. There is one other door



that should be hung on principle—a closet door, so that the direct light from the window or windows may enter the closet when the door is open. As an

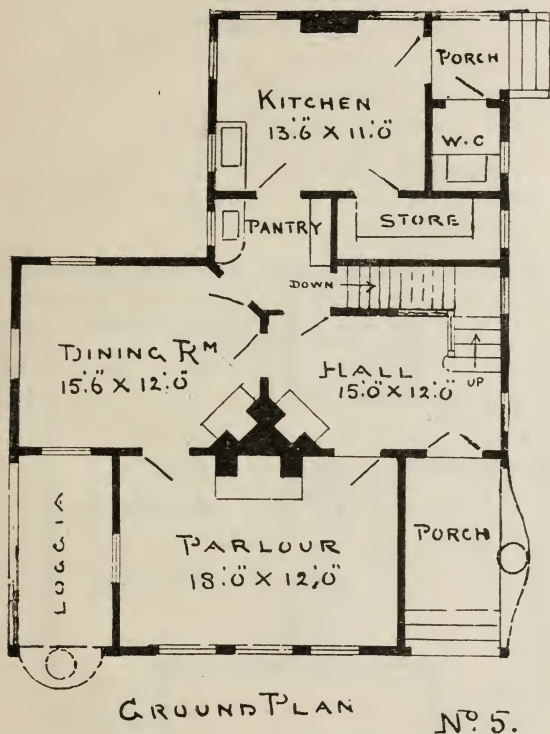
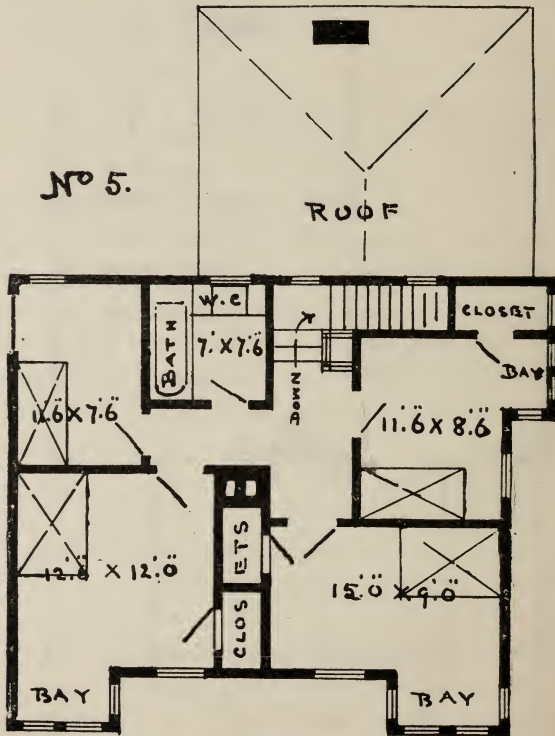


illustration of what we have been saying about beds and doors, let the reader examine the plans of No. 5 and see how much of the comfort and convenience

of the house depend upon these comparatively small details, and they are details that no manufacturer can determine for us in advance. The idea of No. 5



SECOND FLOOR

is a two-story house to start with, and could not by inverting our process of building up be reduced to a one-story house without changes that would destroy

the character of the plan, in which the central idea is to make two chimneys serve our purpose where three are usually built. This economy has forced the octagon arrangement of hall and dining-room but has been made the excuse for a picturesque treatment of the entrance and stairway, and considering that this house can be easily built, complete in all respects, for about \$3,500 to \$4,000 according to locality, we think it fairly successful, and it will be seen that it has the capacity for expansion we have dwelt upon—for a wing can easily be added of one or more rooms on each floor making the hall and entrance the center of the building and this without any change in the house as it stands, beyond cutting through the hall partition, that is now the external wall. Such an addition to this house would be an improvement to the exterior—in spreading the house over the ground without adding to the height. Perhaps the most essential expression to be aimed at in domestic architecture is an air of having a strong hold on the earth. Towers and peaks may look ambitious and even smart, but they seldom look very contented on a small scale. It is difficult to prevent their having an air of trying to ape their bigger neighbors at an expense the house they belong to can ill afford. An honestly built house on a well arranged plan cannot be ugly and must look like what it is — a comfortable place to live in. If we care about names, it may be said that the inevi-

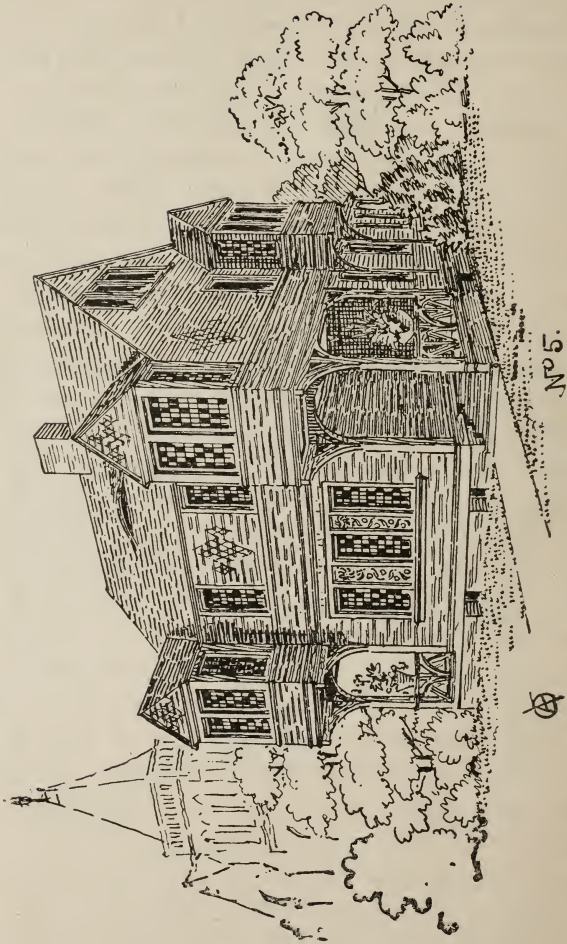


table style of such a building with a pitched roof which is a practical necessity to shed water and to give an air chamber above the bedrooms must be more or less "Gothic." The details throughout may be of such a character as to remind us of colonial days, but unless we really copy stone buildings in our wooden structure, as most of the colonial builders did, we shall find the Gothic idea showing through any trimmings or names we may adopt. Queen Anne architecture is only a term that really means Gothic work trying hard to look like something else with the aid of details that could never have been evolved from the premises. We do not mean to say that beautiful things cannot be and have not been done under the names of Queen Anne and Colonial, but we might as well give these terms their real weight. When a builder frankly accomplishes the object in hand—and that object is merely to erect a comfortable, economical dwelling, he need not fear the resultant effect from an artistic standpoint. Such picturesqueness as the constitution of the design is capable of, is sure to assert itself, and he may be sure that conceits of any sort perched upon the unfortunate pile with an idea of beautifying it must look like what they are—more or less expensive toys that are no proper part of the scheme. The intelligent study and consequent perfection of every detail, even to the form and proportion of the smallest moulding, is quite another



matter in which there is ample scope for the exercise of the most knowing and discriminating taste. The exteriors of Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 could be much more elaborate without resorting to useless dormers and turrets, but we have preferred to adhere to the strictly necessary construction to illustrate the fact that any picturesqueness these cottages can boast is not an assumption but the natural result of the plans. As for color, the tones applied by nature to good materials is often better in effect than any we can apply. The silvery gray of a shingle roof is more harmonious than any painted shingling can be ; but since in other parts of the building we must apply paint as a preservative, let it be honest lead and good linseed oil, without any *mixture* of red or black to produce such grays, drabs or browns as we may desire, because red and black are colors that do not *mix* well for external exposure—very soon asserting themselves in streaks and giving a shabby, ill-used look. All desirable results can be attained with the umbers and ochres, or with light red, Venetian red and Siennas. If blue is necessary for olives and grays let it be Prussian blue and very little of it. A well-painted house may fade more or less, especially the sunny sides, but it will retain a uniformity of tone that prevents its looking shabby. It may be well to say here that the reason a house needs re-painting from time to time, is not that the weather has worn off the paint so much as that the

wood has sucked the oil out of it, and to prevent this a preparation called a filler is used first and on this three coats of paint should be applied. The cost of painting varies a good deal with localities, and as in other matters, with the character of the painter who has rather better opportunities than most people to do a poor piece of work for a good price, because it is more difficult to prevent his using worthless materials.

### CHAPTER III

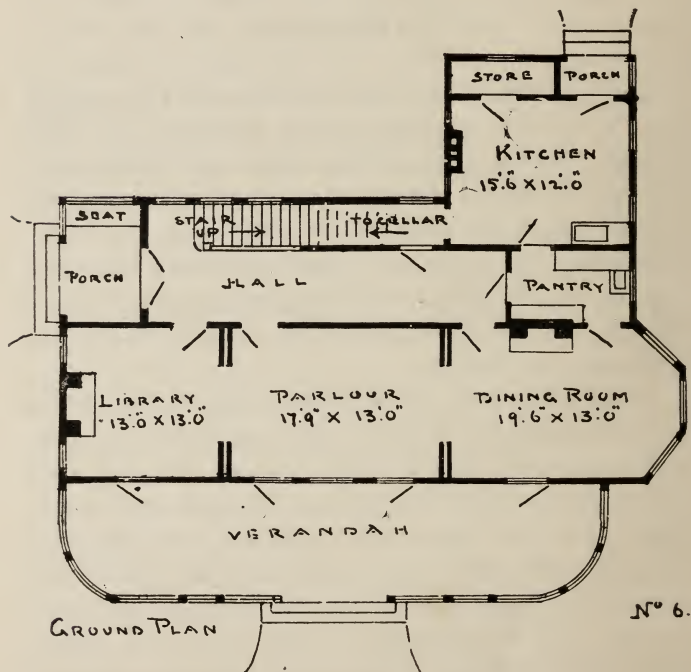
THE STORY of the man who built his house without any stairs, though the several stories were in themselves all that they should be, is not as far fetched as it appears, for there is no more difficult question besetting the designer of a house than the best solution of the problem of stair-building. The positions of chimneys as they rise from the first floor, often prevents the realization of the dispositions we prefer on the second floor, but these adjustments are as nothing to the inexorable demands of a stairway upon our available space. An easy stair is not only a decided mitigation of hardship in daily life, but is much more effective as a feature of an interior, and the same may be said of the width. Any one can plan a steep, narrow stair or ladder—in fact provide some sort of uncomfortable, mean-looking way of getting from one story to another ; but to plan a broad, easy stairway that is an ornament in the hall without sacrificing other essential matters, especially in a house of limited cost, requires ingenuity, experience and taste, in short it is peculiarly a test of ability.

In our house No. 2 there was no great difficulty ; it was only necessary to calculate a sufficient rise before reaching the entrance door to pass above it with room to spare, and happily the position of the door from hall to kitchen left distance enough for the purpose. In No. 4 the problem was not so simple because we could not run the stairs straight up without a turn in the space available on the ground floor, nor could we turn before reaching a certain height, without encroaching upon and destroying our parlor. Hence the expedient of running straight up and out of the building to a platform and then returning ; resulting in a little bracketed bay with a gable roof which is a decided improvement to the exterior of the building as well as an effective feature from the hall below.

In No. 5 the stairway is well enough, but would be better without the platform and turn at the top, and still better with fewer treads in the first run and more space between the stair and the entrance door. Not to make the turn at the top would have destroyed the bathroom, and to have made the first run shorter would have made trouble in two directions—in the height of door into pantry under stair and in the entire bedroom plan ; for there are only the requisite number of risers in any case, and if deducted in the first run, must be added to the second. For every riser there must be a tread which means so much of our limited floor space, not only on one floor but

to some extent on both, for we must leave the well large enough to go up and down without being scalped against the "trimmer."

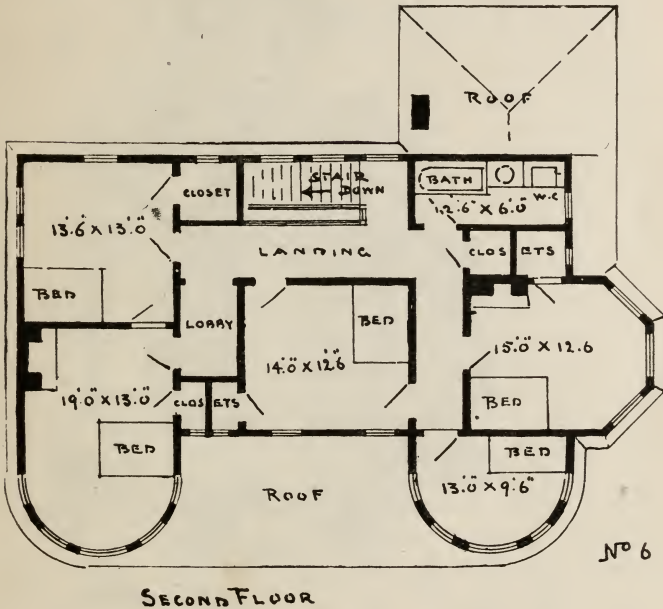
In No. 6 the staircase question is very simple and



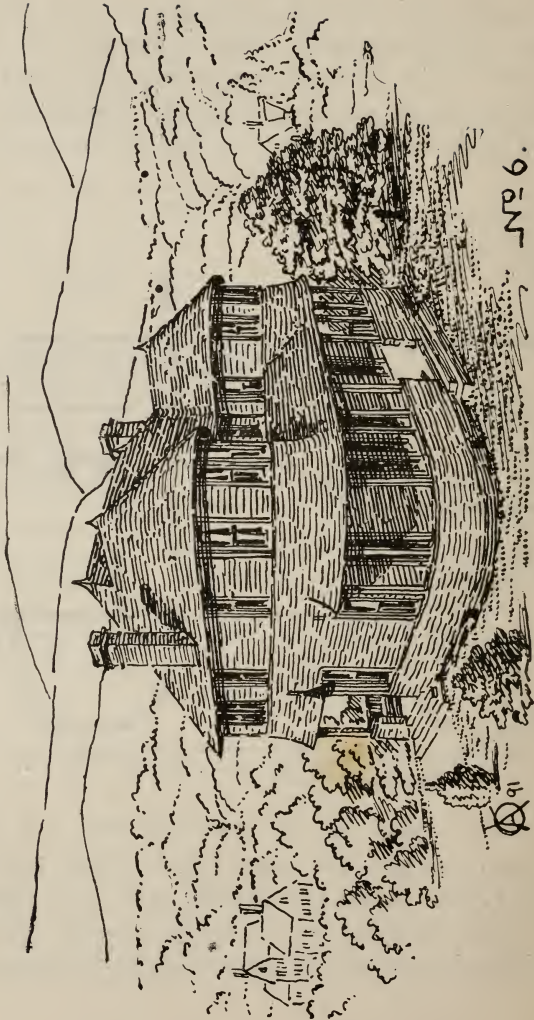
needs no special comment. The arrangement of the rooms on the ground floor is not unlike No. 4 with an additional room, more liberal dimensions and more fireplaces. It ought to be as comfortable



as it looks, for the cost would not be less than six thousand dollars and offers opportunities in all respects, inside and out, for as expensive and luxurious treatment as may be desired. The second floor could be more effectively divided at the sacrifice of

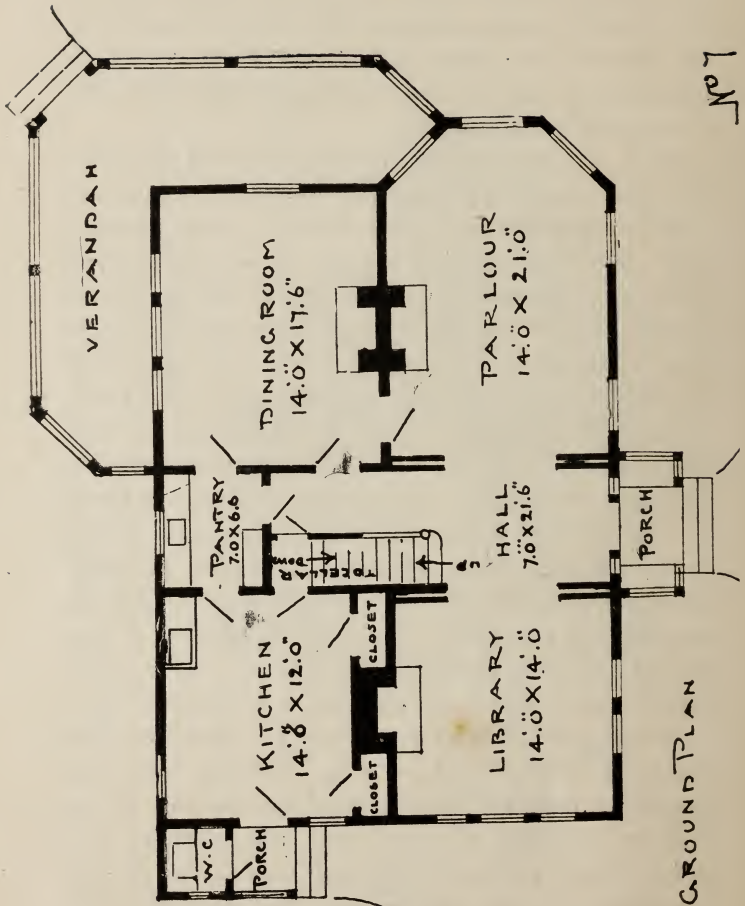


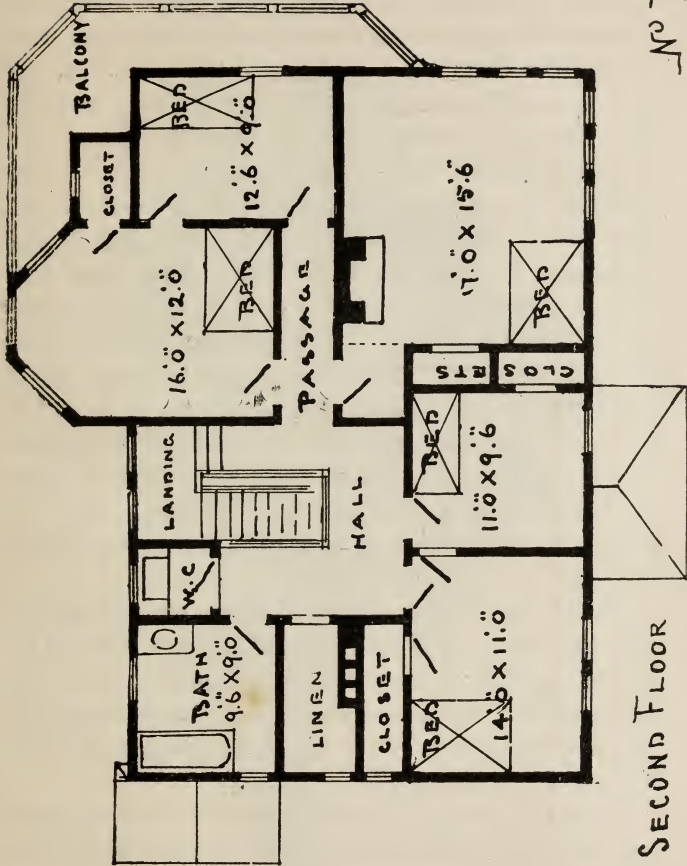
one room; that in the semi-circular bay at the dining-room end, but most people would prefer the extra room. Some sacrifice of space and effect has also been made for the numerous closets, so dear to the housekeeper's heart, and which we think are more



essential to comfort than somewhat larger rooms. The exterior is the plainest that can be devised on the lines of the plans with any sort of regard to appearances, and yet the effect is at least homelike if not ideally picturesque.

No. 7 is a more compact house of about the same accommodation and cost. The individual rooms are a trifle larger and the hall is less of a mere passageway. Which of the two houses is the most successful for the expense involved is not a mere matter of personal preference but of localities and particular sites. The points of the compass are all important in planning a house, as are also all surrounding conditions. There is a reason in each instance why the veranda must be on a certain exposure, the entrance on another. An excellent plan for a house on one side of a suburban street becomes a very questionable arrangement for a house on the other because as regards the street, all the points of the compass are reversed. However, in general it may be said that it is well to have a kitchen on the north end, at least toward the northeast, because there is heat enough from the range while the pantries where things are kept should be cool. Living-rooms and bedrooms that are not reached by the sun at any time are cheerless places at best, but a library, if it is in truth a place to keep and read books in, and not merely an extra parlor, may well have one window toward the cool, steady light of the northern





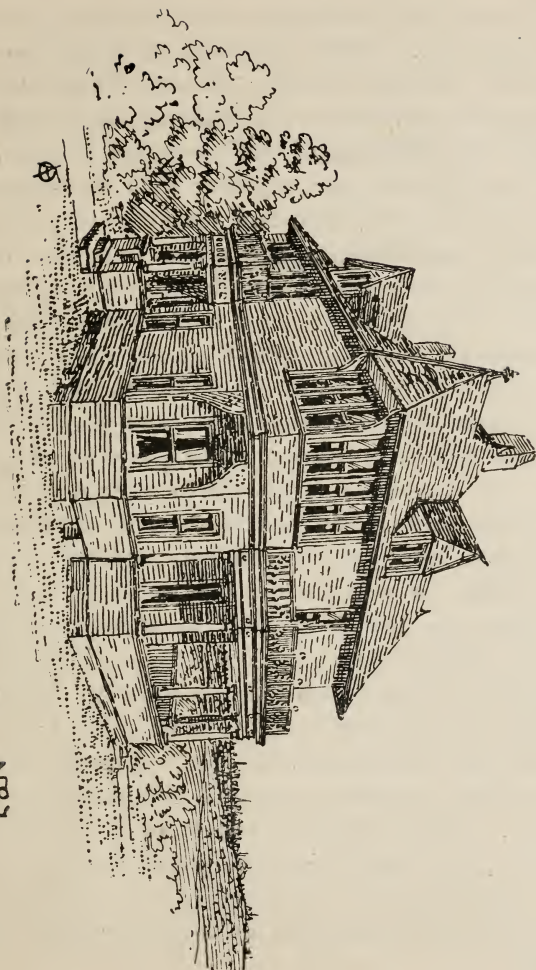


and eastern skies. Beautiful views commanded in certain directions may well have great weight in determining the relative position of our rooms, and certainly a cheerless or disagreeable prospect in one direction will make our house turn its back upon it. It is hardly to be expected that the houses we have been discussing will exactly suit anyone of our readers who takes an interest in such matters, but they must serve to simplify and formulate what experience he has and in that way at least assist him to give the proper relative value to the many considerations involved in building a house, not only to sell but to live in. The Californian is not as much interested as his eastern fellow citizen is forced to be in the question of artificial heat. The relative merits of various appliances are not so much a part of his annual misgivings but in the matter of plumbing the interest of every civilized householder is equal.

There are a few very simple facts about plumbing that are not as fully appreciated as they should be. It is a matter in which it is dangerous to be too economical. We can always mass the plumbing as we have endeavored to do in these plans and thereby economize in lengths of pipe.

In Nos. 4, 5 and 6 it will be seen that the plumbing on second floors is as nearly as possible directly above the plumbing on first floors, but with this precaution and the avoidance of expensive luxuries

No 7



in the way of the manufactured fixtures, parsimony should cease. There are certain things we must have if we would be safe : plenty of water with the necessary appliances for making its use effective, proper ventilation and the necessary lengths, sizes and qualities of pipe, together with first-rate workmanship in our joints and connections to realize a system that deserves the name and that may be counted on to remain in working order as long as it is not required to swallow indigestible substances. Faucets will wear out, even the best; pantry and kitchen sink traps must be cleaned from time to time—even bathtubs, wash trays and basins may at long intervals, find their traps more or less clogged by soap, etc., but these annoyances are to be expected at long intervals, and can be provided for in the fixtures so that any intelligent person can perform the necessary work to remove the obstructions, any other troubles are proofs of poor work or materials, or both—except when pipes are frozen, which calamity seldom or never happens in California. The water-back in the kitchen range may be burned out as the grate often is, but this, though part of the service of the boiler, is hardly a part of the plumbing of the house. When tanks are necessary to provide water for the plumbing, it is a good deal cheaper to pay at the beginning for a thoroughly well-made one than to meet the expense and annoyance a poor one will cause.

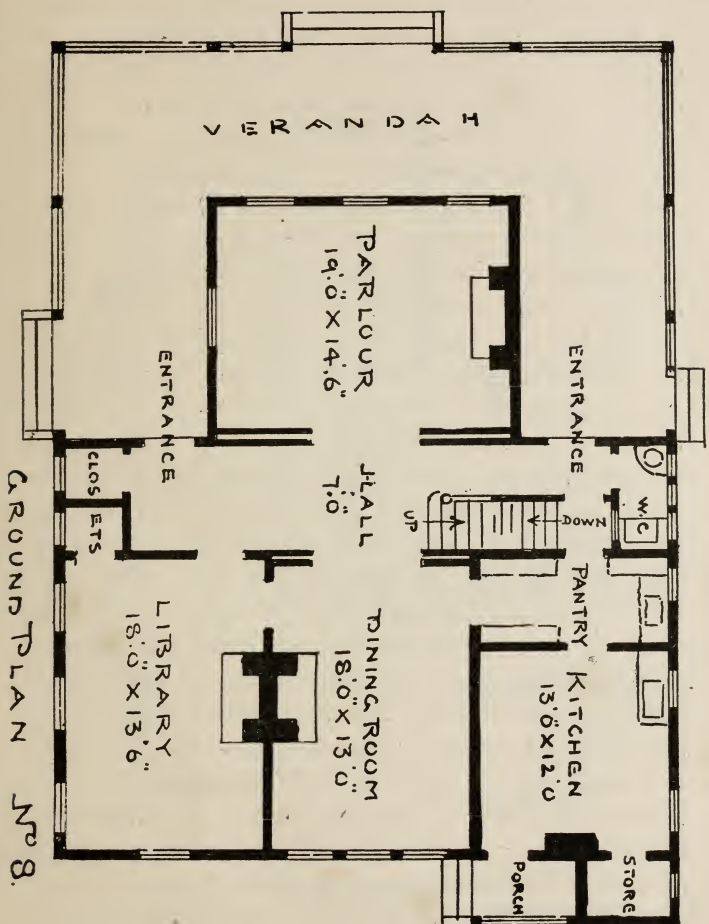
There is no item in house building that is so persistently slighted as plumbing and none we can so ill afford to slight, if only as a mere matter of dollars and cents. The doctors and the apothecaries would feel a general improvement in household plumbing very soon.

## CHAPTER IV.

IT MAY BE SAID OF AMERICA that there are a much larger number of her people than of any other nation who own two homes—a winter and a summer residence, or who at least own one and rent one; and in any general discussion of house building the distinction between the winter and summer residence must not be lost sight of.

It is no part of our present undertaking to discuss the planning of closely-built city residences, because though plenty of people live in them, both as owners and tenants, the questions involved do not concern so large a public as those of the detached suburban, or country house. Many men rent a house or a flat in town. content to own a house in the country, if only a little box among the hills or at the seaside, in which they find rest, and the recreation of entertaining a few friends for a part of each year. These retreats may well be houses in which a family could always find comfort, and in many respects they must be as complete as a permanent residence. The differences are mainly in

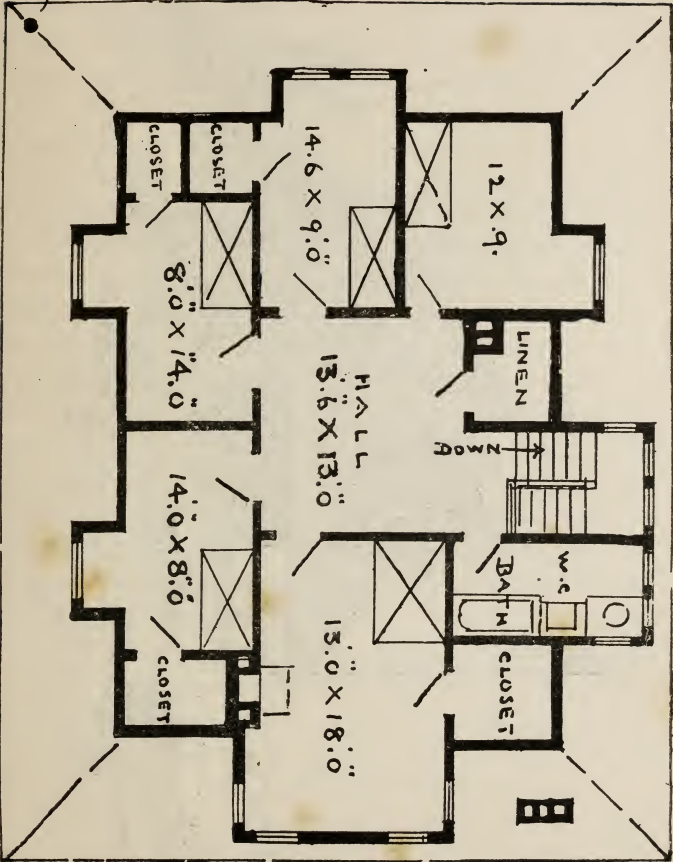




adjuncts and dispositions that would be unnecessary in winter. The verandas that are so essential to enjoyment in summer only serve, in winter, to darken the rooms; and the refreshing summer coolness of a hall with entrances at each end, becomes a chilling winter draught.

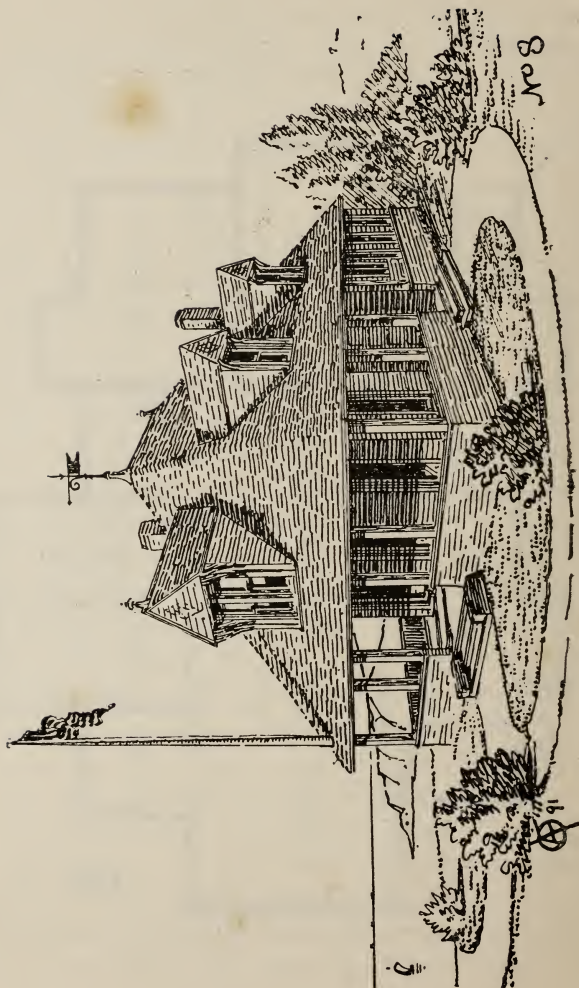
In No. 8 the object has been to design a large, cheap, summer house, and while it may seem that the roof must increase the temperature of the bedrooms, in this instance it accomplishes exactly the opposite result, because the rooms are of the usual form in a two-story building, with an air chamber above, while the extension of the eaves to include the verandas, surrounds the bedrooms with an air chamber that is absent in the ordinary two-story house. This large roof also enables us to extend the second floor beyond the lines of the first story over the veranda, recovering the floor space lost by setting back the wall lines of bedrooms on the sides where the verandas do not exist, thus retaining about the same accommodation on each floor. Such a construction has also the advantage of strength and economy; and we do not think the external effect need be apologized for, especially as our illustration presents the simplest possible treatment of the scheme. A more ambitious or less economical owner might elaborate such a design to almost any extent by adding a suitable tower with a Belvedere observatory, by framing balconies for each

FLAG STAFF



SECOND FLOUR.

40

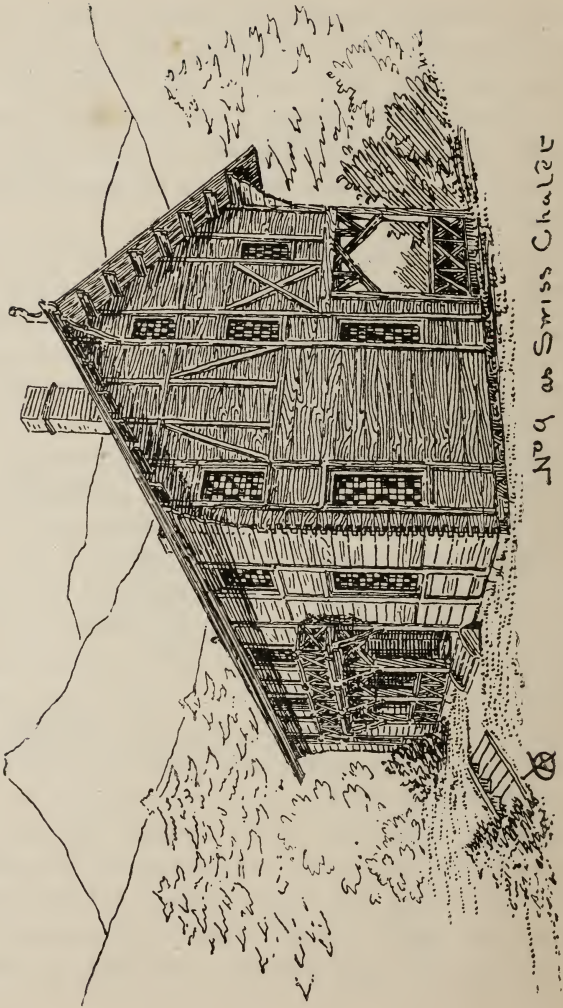


dormer; even by carrying the larger dormer roofs forward to cover these balconies, with turned, supporting columns, balustrades, and all the devices that indicate a full purse and a disposition to enjoy what it can purchase. The cost of such a building as we present could not exceed six thousand dollars anywhere.

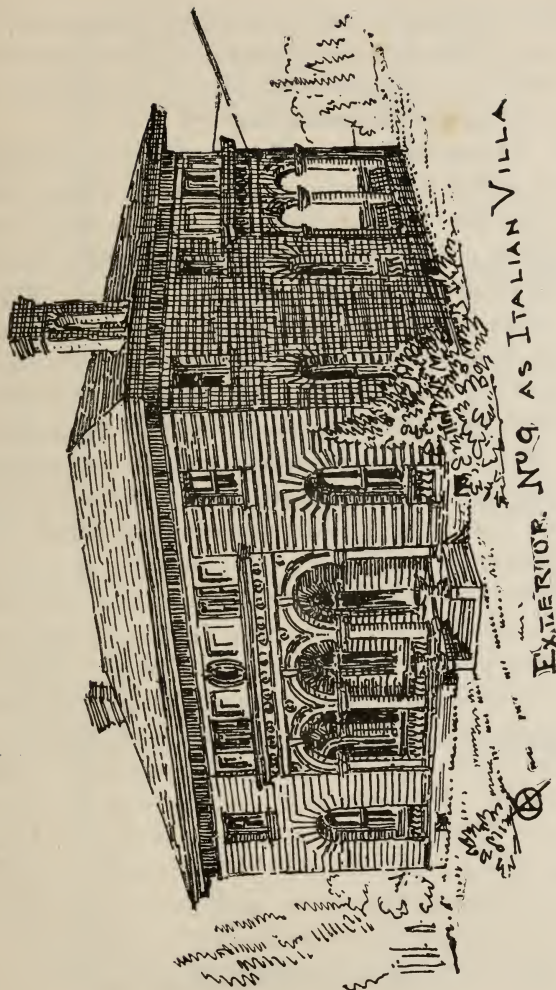
One of the most unique and successful seaside cottages we have seen was constructed almost entirely from a wreck that was beached within a mile of the site, and which the owner of the house purchased at his architect's suggestion, from an Insurance Company. Every part of the vessel that remained found some place in the construction of the cottage. The masts became the veranda posts, iron rings and all. Even the "cross trees" and the figure head were effectively worked in, and while the result could not fairly be called an architectural one, it was neither ugly nor absurd, and developed a sort of Japanese expression without losing its distinctly nautical character. One of the veranda posts was carried up as a flag-staff like that indicated in the accompanying illustration, No. 8; but the spar used for this purpose was steadied by the "fore-stay" from the wreck, which was carried back and made fast to the main ridge of the roof.

At Capitola, in this State, there is a house built as nearly as can be on the plan of the saloon deck of a steamer, and for a summer residence the result



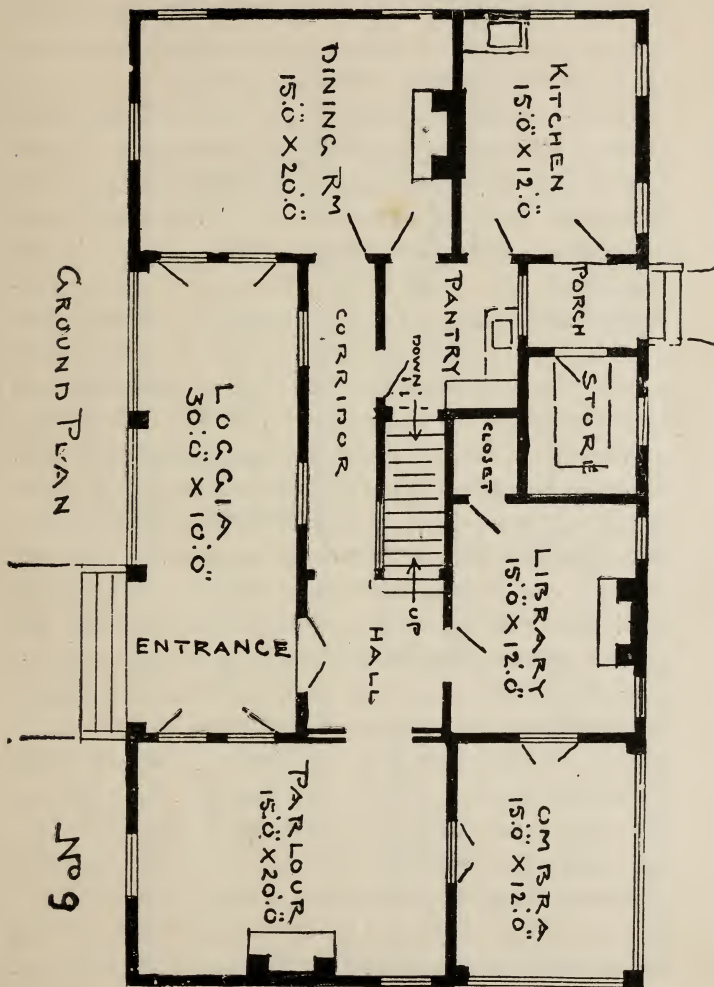


Chalet de Miss Châtel



is both convenient and picturesque. Of course the likeness to the vessel is not made evident externally, but this was a concession to lubberly prejudice by the seaman who designed it.

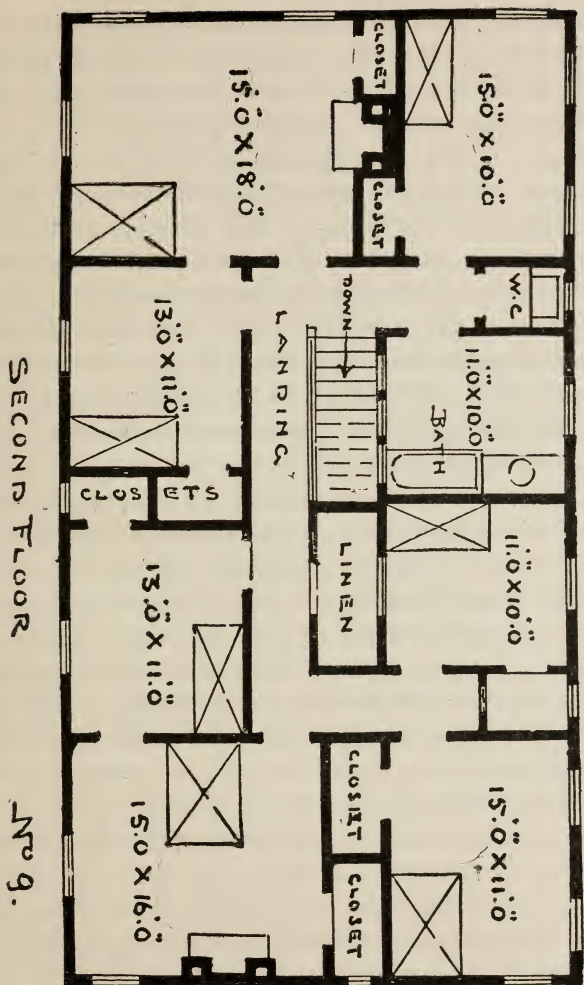
No. 9 is presented in two characters—as a Swiss chalét, or as a country house; and as an Italian villa, or suburban house. The plan lends itself well enough to either idea, and could be made to assume a Gothic appearance with as much reason. This is not strictly as it should be, nor is it strictly true, since a plan must in itself have some definite preference or tendency, which may be strengthened or modified by the materials and methods of construction used. In this instance it must be admitted that the Italian villa suggestion is essentially a stone design; and while we can execute it in wood without incurring much more expense than is involved in the Swiss chalét, the effect could never be completely satisfactory. The plan is simple and compact, and offers a certain variety of effect. It would be a question with most people whether the corridor leading to the dining-room, or the Loggia, should be the wider; and much can be urged for either preference. We believe the controlling fact would be found in the points of the compass, i. e.: If the Loggia has a southern exposure it is none too wide, even at the sacrifice of the corridor, but if the exposure is to the north or east, the hall should be four feet wider at the expense of the Loggia, and



the latter should be fitted with sashes in winter and turned into a conservatory, and parallel communication between parlor and dining-room.

It is not generally understood that a conservatory is not a place in which anything is expected to grow, but merely a showroom for flowering plants that have been brought to perfection in the greenhouse elsewhere. It is precisely the north side of a house that needs the enlivening influence of a conservatory full of color. One advantage in making the Loggia wide is that it may be used as a breakfast room in suitable weather, but if the exposure is unsuitable for this indulgence we still have the refuge of the other Loggia from the parlor for such uses. The second floor is a simple arrangement of such space as there is, and gives, if not the greatest number of bedrooms possible, at all events the most obviously convenient division. As long as a household is carried on on a scale that requires but one servant, there is no need of wasting limited space to provide a back stair, but more complicated households cannot be properly administered without some means of attending to the business, as we may say, without interfering with the pleasure. A stairway up and down which everything is carried, from an infant in lawn and lace to a coal-hod in ashes and soot, must become, sooner or later, in spite of constant care, only fit for the latter service, to say nothing of the inconvenience and annoyance of exposing all





the domestic machinery on one highway from attic to cellar. This house should not, in any locality, cost more than \$7,500 unless the opportunities for expensive finish are improved, and in such case, as we have said before, there is no limit to the cost of a house except the owner's ability to pay. One is reminded, in thinking of the possible cost of interior finish, of Prince Demidorf admiring a pair of sleeve buttons of malachite because he had two mantelpieces of the same at home. But, after all, these mantels were not more beautiful because the material is so costly. The effect to be aimed at is an harmonious completeness according to the scale adopted. A piece of furniture that is too rich or too elaborate for its surroundings, is as fatal to the general effect of finish as one that is much too mean could be, or rather more so, for it discredits the tone of the establishment much as too large a diamond is apt to do in a man's cravat. As to materials and finish, from an external point of view, it is to be hoped that as the timber resources are more rapidly exhausted, bricks and tiles may become much cheaper, the permanence of expression in durable materials that need no coloring but the softening of time, can make our homes more home-like. Tile roofs are not only more durable and more beautiful than shingle roofs, but being non-conductors as bricks are, give us a house at once warmer in winter and cooler in summer. At present a tile roof is about three to

four times as expensive as a shingle one, and for the benefit of the uninitiated who may wish to calculate the difference for any particular house, we may say that roofing is quoted at the square of 100 superficial feet. 1,000 shingles lay  $1\frac{2}{3}$  squares of roof and costs about \$7.50 laid, more or less according to locality and quality of shingles. A thousand tiles, according to the pattern adopted, will lay about three squares of roof and cost \$25 to \$30 a thousand laid more or less according to locality and pattern. The tiles are becoming steadily cheaper while good shingles are increasing in price, and from present indications, in a few years the tile roof will not be more than twice as expensive as a shingle one, while if properly laid it is practically everlasting. The cost of a house is not only its first contract price but the bill of repairs from year to year, which, though not money out of pocket at the completion of the building, is the same in effect as a larger investment; so that a larger appropriation at the start for good cellars, good plumbing and good roofs—in short for the vulnerable points of a building may easily foot up a saving in ten or fifteen years, it is a mere question of interest accounts familiar to every business man.

## CHAPTER V.

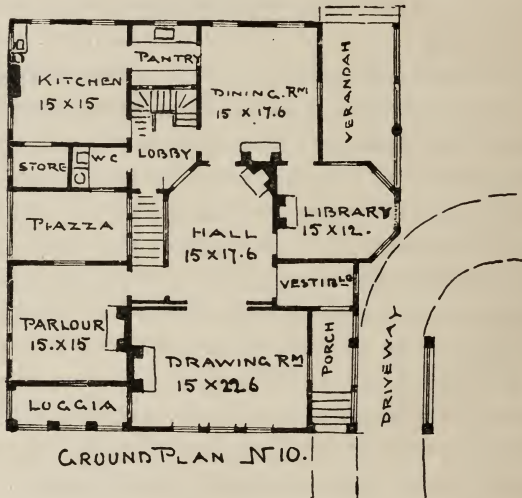
AMERICANS build two hundred thousand dwelling houses more or less, annually, as well as many thousand apartment houses, and it is interesting to note that the average cost of our dwelling houses is not much increased by the very expensive ones, or to put it another way, the large and increasing demand is for something much better than a cheap makeshift. That everybody wants more than the mere necessities of life is certain enough, but that two hundred thousand of us every year should actually succeed in getting the difference between existing and living, looks as if there were something like what the old nigger called "misdecomposition" in the economist's statement, that ninety-nine men in a hundred die insolvent. Perhaps both statements are true, but the latter can be listened to with less discouragement in the hope inspired by the more cheerful knowledge. Americans would literally include the restive citizens of South America and Mexico, as well as of Canada, but our statistics relating to house building are not so comprehensive,

while we suspect that the economist's doleful summary is intended to be even more far reaching. In any event the proverbial veracity of figures when based upon United States facts is seldom anything but reassuring. That we spend more than a dollar a week for every man, woman and child in the country on building of all sorts is a large enough fact, but that there are thirty thousand of us who can build a \$10,000 house every year is really a much larger fact in its significance and makes us feel that some apology is due our readers for occupying their time with matters of smaller importance. We will say in extenuation, however, that the cheaper houses we have presented have each served their turn in illustrating some particular points of convenience or construction which will find larger application in more ambitious schemes.

In No. 10 every sort of accommodation that can reasonably be expected for an investment of \$10,000 is provided, and more too, unless the builder is careful to adhere to severe simplicity in all details. The house can be well built for the appropriation but it cannot be elaborated. It is fair to assume that the owner of such a house would also own some horses and would consequently often wish for shelter when mounting or dismounting; hence the driveway which his visitors in carriages would find very hospitable, while it certainly adds interest to the exterior and enlarges the bedroom above. It will be

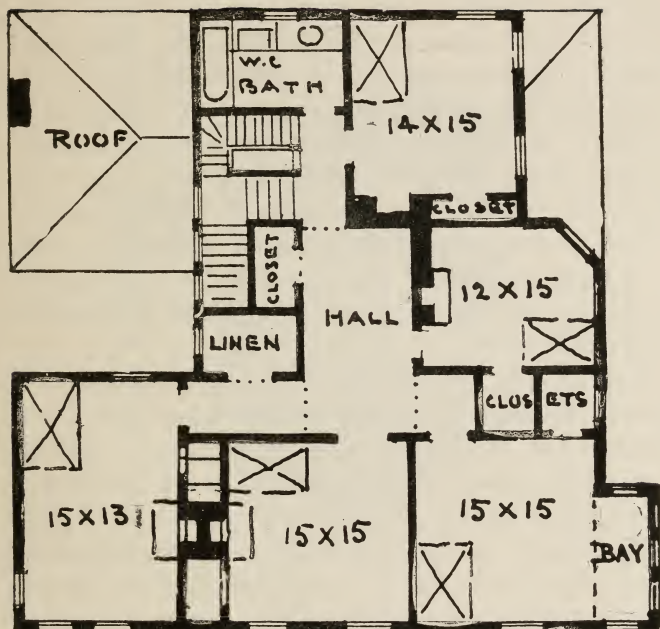


seen that the parlor wing could be deducted at a considerable saving if the house was considered unnecessarily large, and could be added to at any time to meet expanding ideas. This wing would not represent more than twelve hundred dollars of the



ten thousand as a deduction, but it would cost more than that to add to the completed house.

Where a house stands on a slope sufficiently steep to bring the basement or cellar out of ground in the rear, a very large saving can be effected by placing the kitchen in the basement, thus pocketing as it were, almost the whole cost of the kitchen wing, and



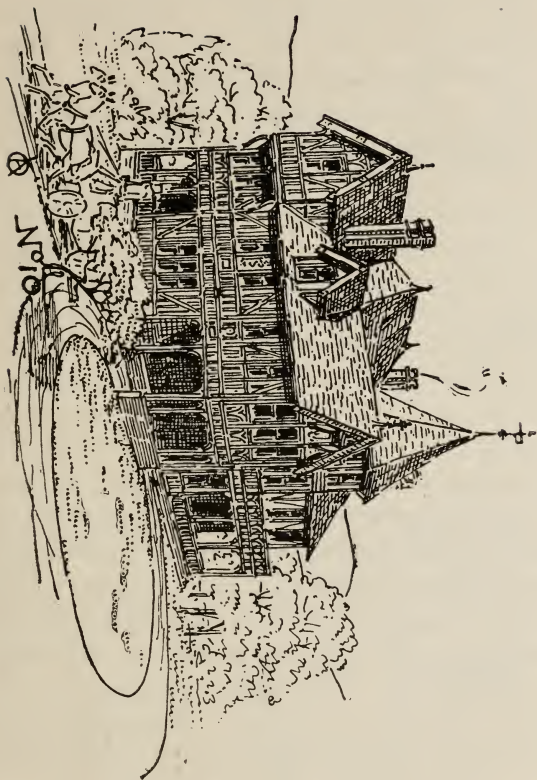
SECOND FLOOR NO 10

this is true of all the houses but the first that we have discussed.

We know that a strong prejudice exists against basement kitchens, and where they are below the ground level it is a well founded prejudice, but where they are practically on the first floor, the only valid objection is that to going up and down stairs which is compensated by the more convenient access to the cellars from the kitchen. The saving is in the walls, foundations and roof of the kitchen wing. The pros and cons are matters of convenience, real or imaginary on the one hand, and the saving of money on the other, not at all a matter of good or bad building.

Put the kitchen of No. 10 in the basement and deduct the parlor wing and we shall have still a very comfortable, convenient and commodious house at a cost of not more than seventy-five hundred dollars; to which at any time we can add to our heart's content without a struggle between inconsistencies. There is room in the attic for three or four single rooms and the back stair can be carried up to serve them. The central hall with its octagon end and wide stairway is the key to this design, and insures effective vistas in all directions.

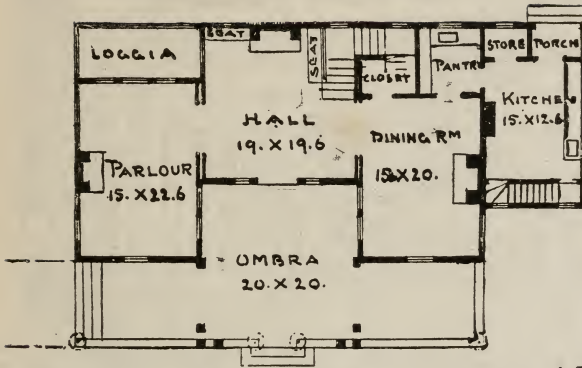
Some objections might be made to main entrance door being tucked in an angle of the porch; but this could only be obviated by the sacrifice of space that is too valuable for other purposes that seem to us



more important. After all a man lives *in* a house, and while he would not wish to appear to sneak in by a back door and would much prefer that his house should as the old Prebendary of Salisbury said: “accost the stranger right at his entrance,” he cannot afford to think of the stranger’s feelings before his own comfort and satisfaction. To be sure the driveway could be built at right angles to its present position and the side of the house on which the octagon tower is, made the front with broad steps leading directly to the door ; but this would place the depth of the house across the lot which must then be a wide one.

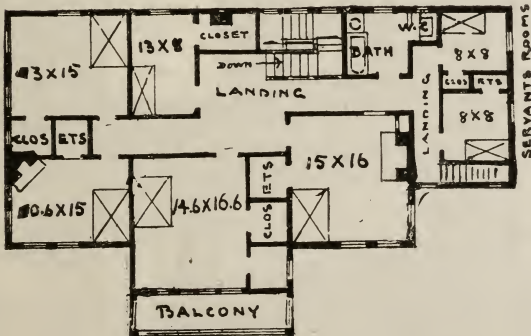
If the graduation of cost in this discussion were of importance, No. 11 should have been disposed of before No. 10, but the connection of our ideas is governed by the consideration of particular features, and just now we are bent on developing halls treated as additional rooms more than on ingenious economies. The proportion of rooms together with the relative dispositions of doors, windows and fireplace influence people’s feelings more than they are usually aware of ; in every house there are rooms that are more agreeable than others both by day and night showing that sunlight does not account for the preference. As an extreme instance of this, it is easy to see that no person would choose for reading or conversation a long narrow room with doors at one end and windows at the other if there were another room



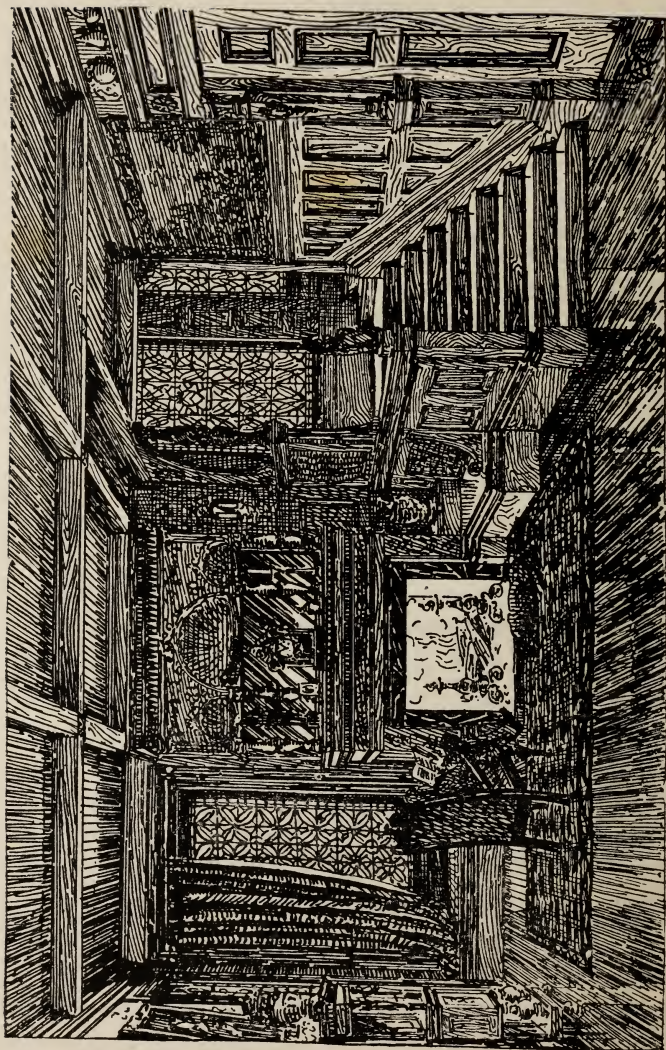


GROUND PLAN

Nº 11.



SECOND FLOOR

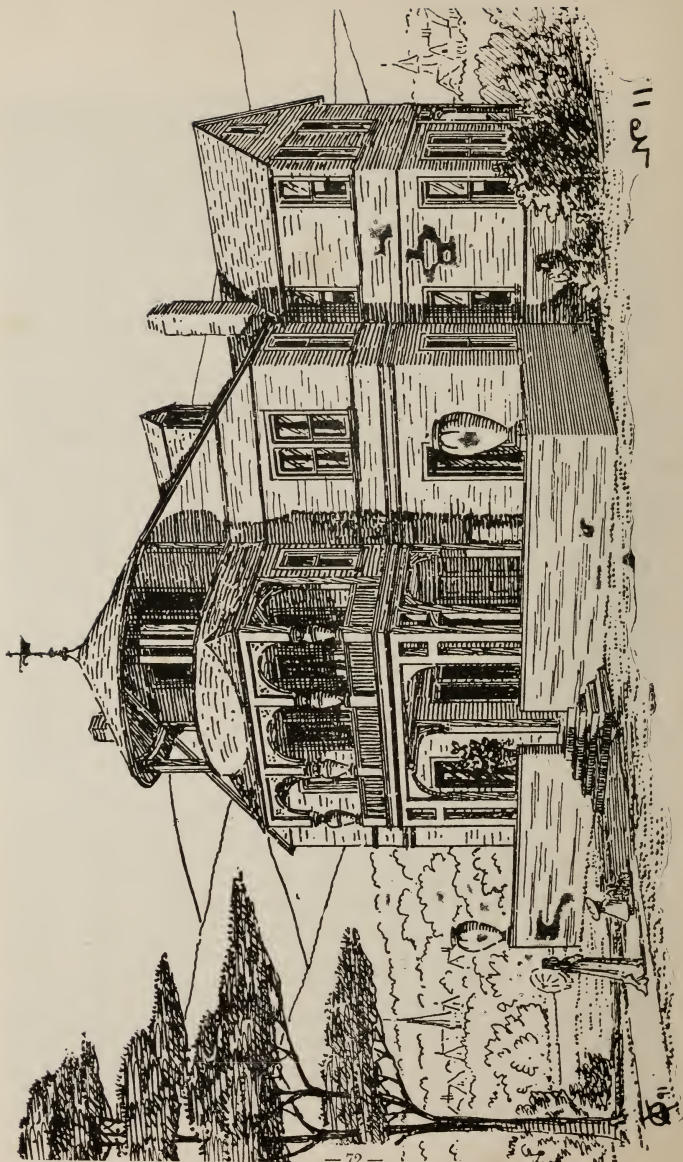


available. Therefore if we wish a hall to be used as a sitting-room we must see to it that it is not only more nearly square but that persons seated near the fire or in other desirable places as regards a good light on a book, shall be out of the line of travel to and from the other rooms and the stairway. To this end we may deliberately set up obstacles to progress in certain directions, as for instance, turning the stair in No. 11 before reaching the fireplace and forming a sort of alcove out of the line of march, gaining also by this arrangement a place against the paneling of the stair for a permanent settee at the fireside. The large ombra in front not only serves as a porch to the entrance but as a pleasant place in which to serve any meal during hot weather without disturbing the various chairs and hammocks for which there is more than room enough.

The uncovered terraces or piazzas on either side are not without their uses, both as approaches and as places to set large jars of flowering shrubs and exotics, while the simple lines of the parapet walls add very much to the effect of the whole building that without them and the semi-circular loggia above would be little more than a sort of domestic barn, though there is something to be said for the proportion which is not bad.

It must be remembered that as we said very early in this discussion, the more nearly square a building is for a given size, the cheaper it is. Every break





from a simple rectangular parallelogram entails additional expense. This house with as much accommodation on the second floor as No. 10 is for this reason alone a much cheaper house and could be built for \$6,500 to \$7,000. The economies we suggested as feasible for No. 10 would reduce the cost of this house at least \$1,000, but would rob us of our servants' bedrooms above the kitchen and involve some ingenious planning to work in a back stairway without disturbing our present very convenient provisions for the butler's or serving pantry and the china closet. These changes could however be made without serious complications and the servants could be provided for in the attic at the cost of a dormer window or two, which latter would rather improve the exterior from any point of view.

On the other hand, the peacefully spreading effect of the whole building would suffer, and we should on the whole willingly pay that thousand dollars rather than accept the sacrifices it represents.

The climate of California is peculiarly adapted to the use of what is called rough cast and plastered exteriors. We do not mean the coating of brickwork to represent stone, but the plastering of the panels formed by the main framing timbers known as half-timbered work. This method is little, if at all, more expensive than the usual one, and is much more durable, being at the same time more weather proof. To say that it is more beautiful is merely a compari-

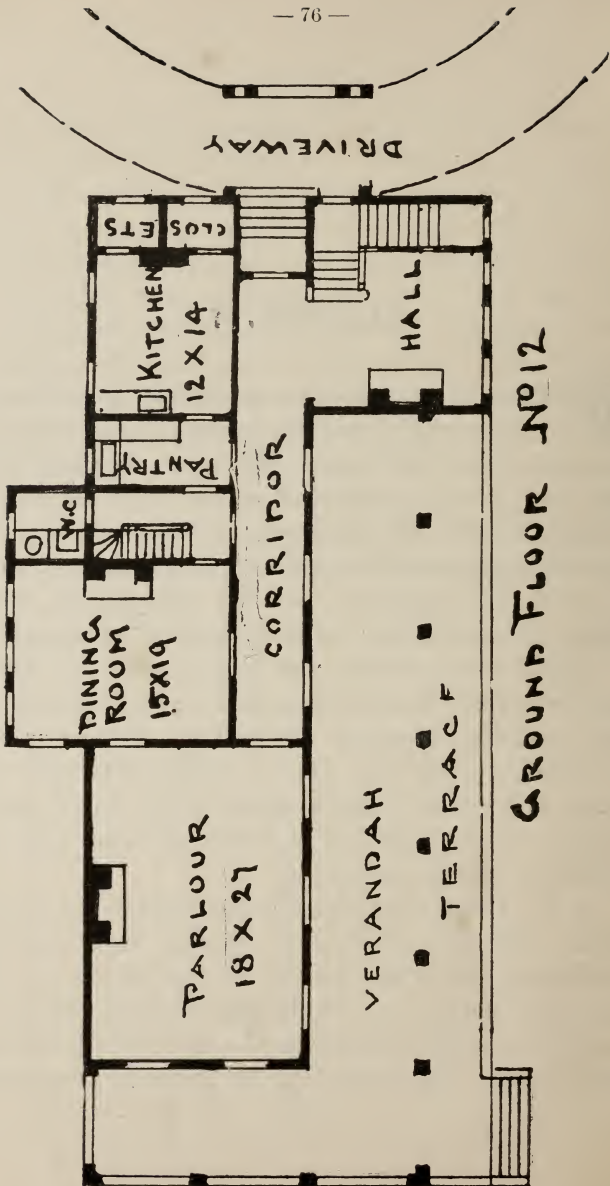


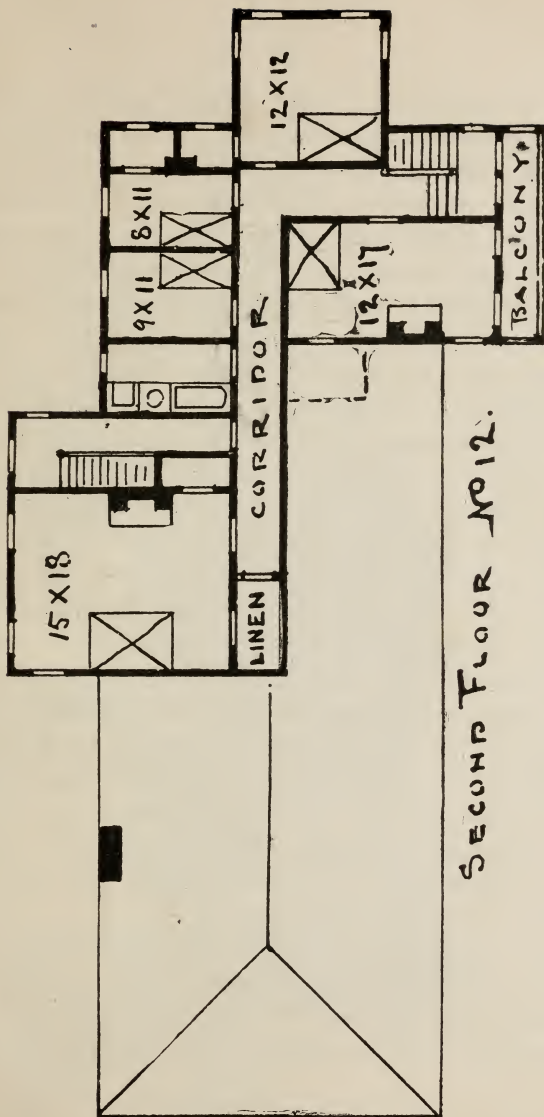
son. The usual methods of enclosing the house in rustic boards or shingles must always have a more or less perishable, temporary expression whether paint is used or not—while well-designed, well-executed, half-timbered work has a quality and repose that makes a house look almost indigenous. In localities exposed to hard frosts alternating with wet weather, the cement plastering does not always behave well from year to year, though we know of instances even among the White Mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire that have left nothing to be desired, but as these conditions do not obtain on the Pacific Coast we hope to see many examples of a treatment so well adapted to domestic architecture.

## CHAPTER. VI.

THERE IS MORE than one architectural lesson to be learned from the remains of the Spanish occupation in California. We begin to appreciate that the picturesqueness of many of the least expensive of the old missions was not so much a fanciful caprice of designers, as an intelligent effort to meet the conditions and the climate half way. Even after deducting the peculiarities dependent on "adobe" construction, the employment of stone, tiles, etc., there remains a certain practical simplicity and peaceful, domestic air entirely distinct from ecclesiastic expression that is easily obtainable in wood, and which is much better suited to the peculiarities of domestic life in California than any importation could possibly be.

In No. 12 we have attempted to give shape to this idea. The combination of terrace and veranda, extending the whole length of the facade, is the essential feature of the design, without which it would be merely an ordinary house with a long one-story wing. The rooms on the ground floor could





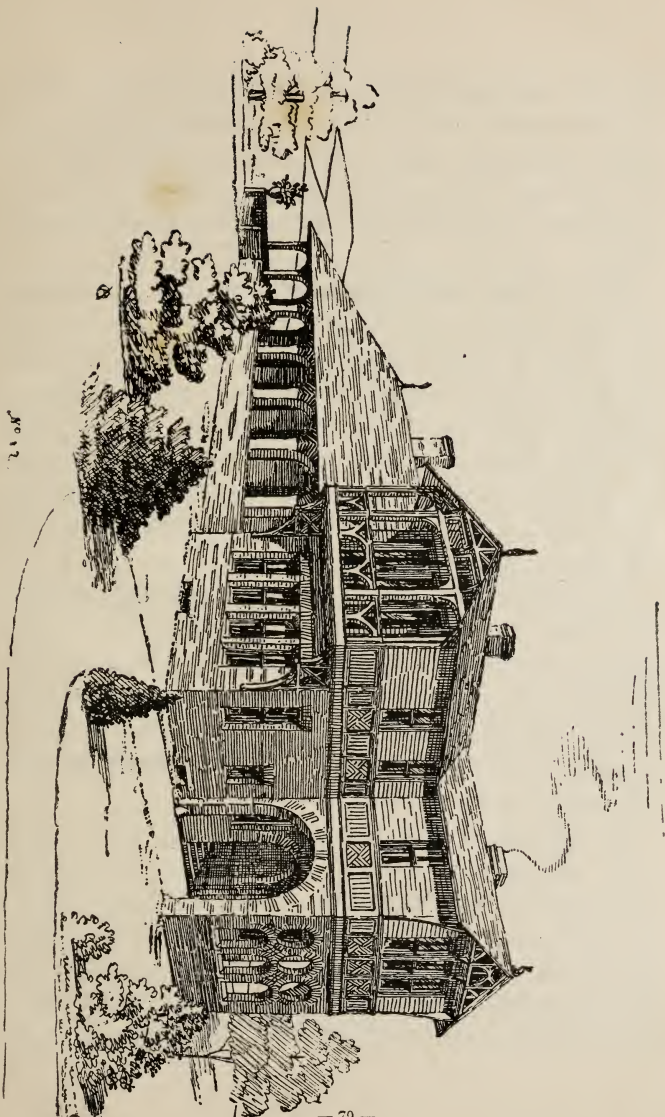
SECOND FLOOR NO 12.

be more numerous, if desirable, by adding another wing for kitchen, pantries, etc., at the rear; but for most families the accommodations provided would be ample. We believe that, especially in the country, large airy rooms with generous provision for sitting out of doors under cover are more desirable than any attempt to realize the complete list of rooms for various purposes, as parlor, reception room, library, etc., because it is almost always a question of building a house within some definite limit of cost that forces us to make compromises of all sorts, and with a given number of rooms the most evident economy is in their respective size. As large a room as the parlor of No. 12 (18x27) may well serve as library and general living-room for a considerable family and with an ample dining-room, in which twenty persons may be comfortably served on occasions, not only the decencies, but many of the elegancies of housekeeping can be fully maintained. The hall, veranda and terrace are as much a part of the social territory as the rooms, and we think that with a given sum of money, say in this instance not more than \$9,000, the result is much more comfortable and more effective than any collection of small rooms could be.

The driveway at the side, which is really a *porte cochère* since it runs under the building, and is not a mere adjunct, could be dispensed with at some saving, but with it goes one of our five bedrooms.



No 12.



On the other hand the roof above the long wing contains space enough to accommodate at least five more bedrooms, if needed, at an additional cost of not more than \$1,500 at the outset, or \$2,000, if planned and finished subsequently as an enlargement.

This house would naturally be more imposing if built of stone or of cemented brick with a tile roof and a paved terrace, but such a treatment would involve almost double the cost. Again, a liberal treatment of the opportunities afforded for effective interior features such as the wainscotings, mantels and stairway could find profitable employment for as much money as the owner cared to invest in "a joy forever."

We need hardly say that the profit we allude to would not be estimable in current coin since a man seldom recovers in that measure of value anything like the cost price of his indulgences, for the very simple reason, that few if any purchasers are in search of satisfaction exactly in the shape he has attempted to realize it.

In regard to the necessary dispositions in any well ordered household for kitchens, pantries, housemaids' closets, china closets and back stairs, we think it a foolish economy that sacrifices these essentials to any considerations of appearances. We can much better dispense with elaborate finish in mantels, mirrors and stained glass than with the

accommodation that facilitates the business of the establishment.

It has been an apothegm these thousand years that a poor workman complains of his tools and, of course, there is no substitute for willing efficient service—but whether this most valuable of all creature comforts be obtainable or not, the fact remains that to a certain degree at all events, service will be rendered in any household according to the facilities afforded in every respect. If the work to be done is clearly appreciated by the housekeeper, he or she must retain the necessary number of competent persons to perform it and must provide comfortable accommodations for the personal needs of the employees. Otherwise it is unreasonable to object to slovenly work or to its progenitor discontent.

As an instance in point, it may be observed that where the pantry and china closets are cramped and ill lighted there is a large increase in broken china, a valid excuse for dirty silver and a fruitful source of fault-finding. Again, where a number of servants are obliged to eat in the kitchen and use the kitchen also as a sitting-room in leisure moments, more or less quarreling and consequent demoralization certainly follows, whose consequences will be apparent in the quality of the dishes served in the dining-room if they do not permeate the whole domestic economy.

It is not unusual to economize by locating the wash-trays in the kitchen, partly to meet the convenience of a cook who is expected to be a laundress, as well, and may have to turn momentarily from one occupation to the other. Even in such cases there is no real sacrifice of convenience in separating the departments if the connecting doorway is in the proper relative position to the range that must have a moment's attention now and then, while the separation of soup and soapsuds must be beneficial to both processes. The rejoinder of the housewife, who when asked why with her means she was contented to agitate, as the French say, with one servant, that when she was left without servants she found it easier to do the work of one than of two, was to some extent, we suspect, a protest against an ill contrived house. It is a curious fact that irrespective of the number of servants we intend to employ we must generally have our reception room as well as our parlor, our library, our dining-room and our hall, or a decorated passage-way upon which this euphemistic name is imposed. But we are unwilling to provide the implied accommodation in kitchen, laundry, pantries and servants' hall that our house may be properly cared for so as to be a comfort and a luxury instead of a vexation. Such a household as No. 12 suggests could be well carried on with three servants, but we think the bedroom accommodation scant for such a family as this implies, and recourse must be had to that space in the

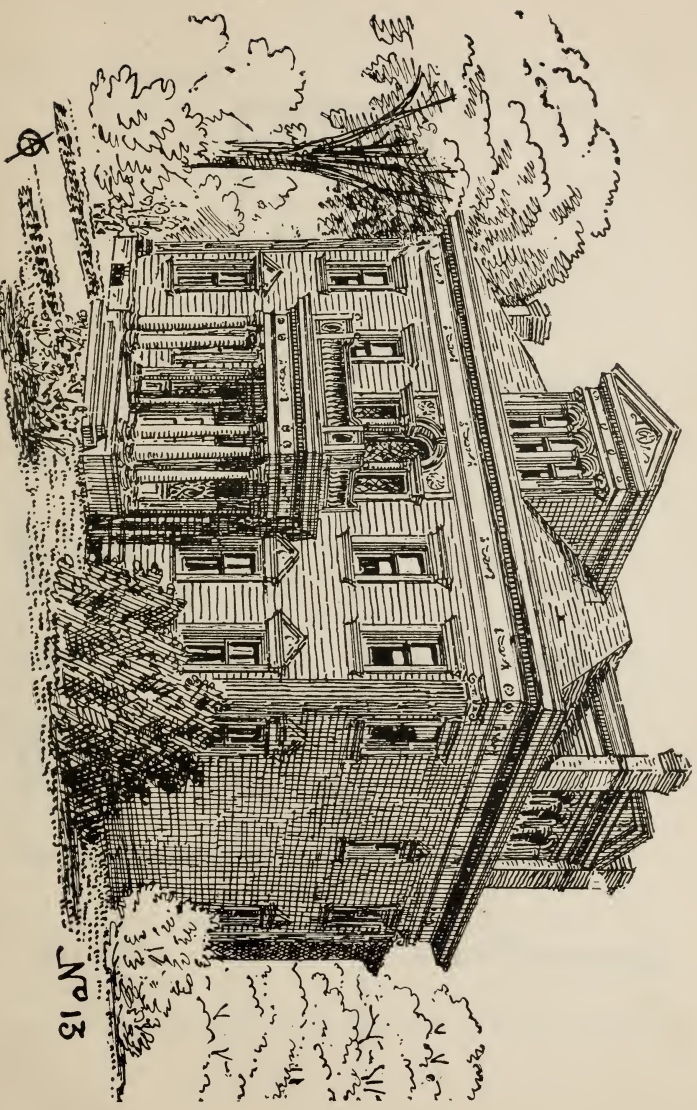
roof of the wing, if we would have room to offer our hospitality to a friend. Such an enlargement of our second floor plan would require the addition of a few dormer windows but these would be rather an advantage to the exterior, if very simply designed, so as not to disturb the effect of repose that the very monotony of the arcade has achieved with its long sleepy eaves.

It should be remembered that in any dwelling it is much more the relative importance in mere size given to the different parts than to any unnecessary adjuncts that we shall owe our best effects. The projection of the eaves may be so great as to make the rooms gloomy or so slight as to result in a staring expression. It is a question of the relative width of the veranda to the height of the eaves above the floor. Roughly speaking the wider the veranda the higher the eaves should be and the greater their projection, until we reach the effect of the loggias of a moresque palace. In this design domestic quality would be destroyed by doubling the height of the arcade and suggesting the sort of importance that pertains to a public building if only to a hotel. It seems to us of the first importance in this design that the terrace parapet should be solid ; if not of brick with a coping, at least completely enclosed as a wall. This is not only a matter of effect but of comfort, as it shuts off draughts about one's feet and imparts in other ways a sense of comfort.



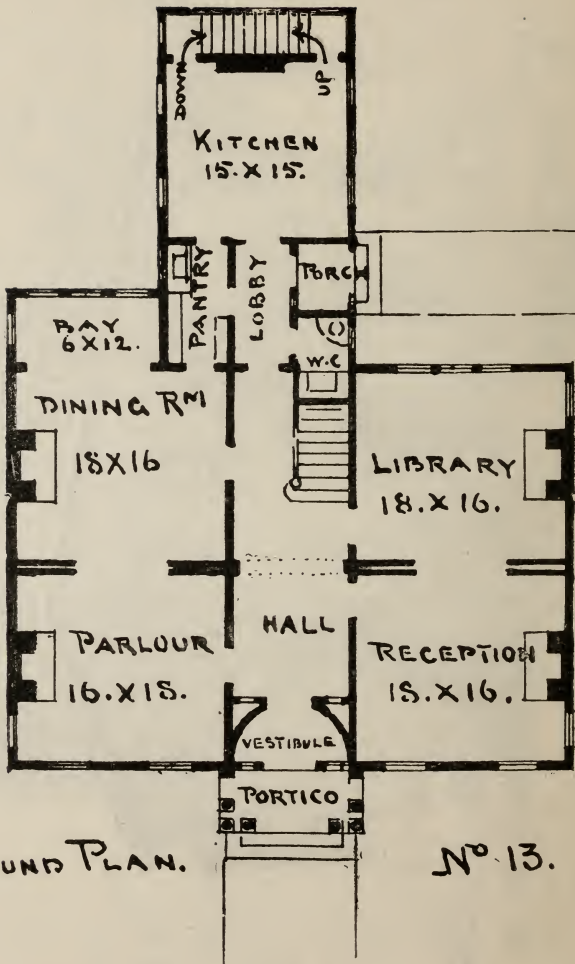
## CHAPTER VII.

THERE ARE PERHAPS no more comfortable homes than the old colonial houses, still standing here and there throughout the original thirteen States of the Union. After all our century of experiment there is now a decided inclination to reproduce the same simple thing that contented our great grandfathers. We begin to realize that however picturesque all sorts of nooks and irregularities may be, there is real comfort in the old-fashioned square rooms on either side of a central hall and that our great grandfathers realized the maximum of elegance and convenience consistent with economy. We do not mean to say that many of our modern inventions cannot be added to or worked into the shell of a colonial house with great advantages, but merely that in the simple square building, elegantly finished outside and in, we find little chance of improvement. It is true that these houses were originally intended to look as much like stone as wooden construction permitted. Washington's house at Mount Vernon, Virginia, for instance, is ostentatiously made to



Colonial style

No 13



GROUND PLAN.

No. 13.

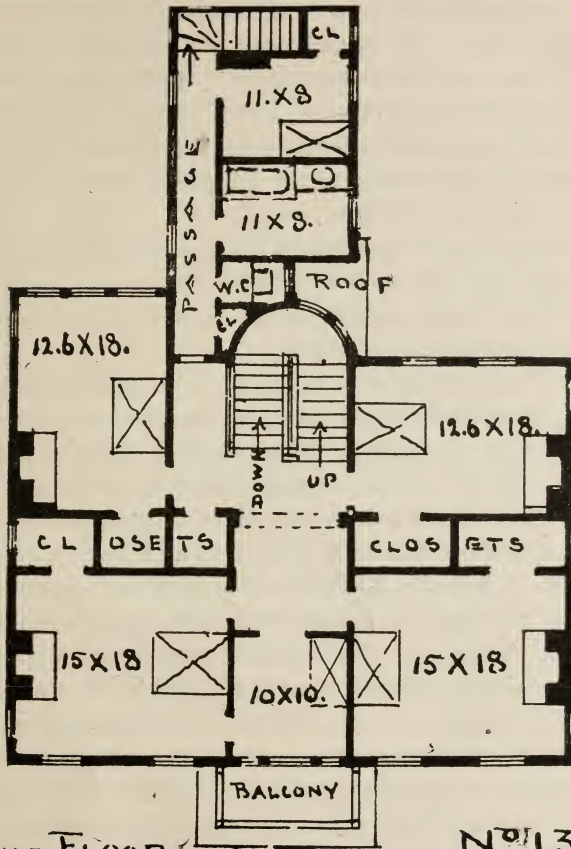
represent channel jointed blocks, but facilities as well as taste soon made it necessary to modify designs to meet the conditions, and our best examples of colonial houses are frankly wooden designs enriched with the most delicate and exquisitely executed classic detail that does the greatest credit to the patient skill of the joiners when there were no mills to do most of the work for them, and when every moulding was worked by hand.

Our attempt to suggest such a colonial house as would be comfortable at a cost of not more than \$10,000 is illustrated in the accompanying cuts, No. 13, and although this design is not a copy of any old house, it has the characteristics that make it distinctly colonial. The rooms are not large, but they are not too small to maintain an air of comfortable hospitality, and the conveniences that are not to be found in old buildings are so arranged as to detract nothing from the old-fashioned expression of the whole building. As a matter of interior effect, if it is desired to preserve the colonial idea, the fireplaces are very important. No modern grate with a handful of coal struggling to give the idea of a fireside can have the requisite effect of home comfort; much less can a stove, however nickel plated and polished, reconcile us to the loss of the old square generous opening with the dogs bearing crackling logs.

In colder places than California extreme winter

forces people to sacrifice many pleasures to necessity and to them it is a serious deprivation to have three-fourths of their heat go up the chimney, especially when the cost of fuel for heating is a considerable item of household expense. But on the Pacific Coast an open fire is a real luxury that takes the chill off an evening and is the most beautiful decoration an interior can have. To propitiate those housekeepers who object to open fires because they make dust and dirt, we have the modern improvements of chimneys that are sootfall-proof and the ash pits that avoid the necessity of carrying scuttles of ashes through the rooms. These improvements do not add more than one hundred dollars to each fireplace in a properly constructed chimney stack ; and when even this additional appropriation is not forthcoming, it may be urged that though cleanliness may be in some respects properly exalted to godliness, we build a house more for the purpose of living in happily than to advance the art of housekeeping for its own sake as an art. We once knew an old lady who gloried in an unusually fine specimen of a colonial house with all its accommodations of mahogany furniture mounted in brass, tall clocks, and spindle-legged chairs, and who with all this wealth and much more in the shape of other real estate and securities, was of such frugal mind, that she spent most of her time in polishing and dusting and the rest in sitting in her woodshed for fear of





SECOND FLOOR

No 13.

marring her perfect work. She caught a cold in the woodshed and now a less spartan generation are warming their shins before her blazing logs, careless of the inevitable staining of the brasses, but much happier than she ever knew how to be. We think a man gets more for his money in such a house as this than in any more irregular plan. There are fewer compromises—every inch of space tells, and while the hall cannot be used as an additional sitting room unless the whole house were on a much larger scale, the accommodation is not missed with our four comfortable rooms.

We have made a feature of the stair-landing by a very simple device, and the stairway on the second floor is not the least effective part of the interior, all of which it will be seen is well lighted and so planned as to shut off the perspectives of long passage-ways, while there is ready access to and from all parts of the building. This house is peculiarly independent of the light on either side of the main building as the windows on the sides are more matters of interior and exterior effect than necessities. They do make the rooms and the whole building more cheerful, but on a very narrow lot they could be dispensed with at no serious sacrifice. The attic is capable of accommodating four more good bedrooms and a liberal supply of closets, so that this house could easily meet the requirements of a family of sixteen persons including the servants, assuming that four of

the bedrooms are double rooms. On the other hand, if the kitchen wing was deducted and the kitchen included in the main building at the sacrifice of one of our four rooms, the rest of the house remaining as it is with the exception of some slight changes to meet pantry requirements, the house could be built for \$2,000 less and would still be a very comfortable place.

Many of our diagrams of ground floor plans show a lavatory or toilet room, as in this case, accessible indirectly from the staircase hall and this we believe to be a comfort and convenience worth many times its cost which is approximately a matter of a hundred dollars added to the plumbing bill if included in the contract for the whole work. A somewhat smaller house than this could be built on exactly the same plan but not much smaller because the hall must be at least six feet wide or there is not room for the return of the stair from the landing. The rooms on either hand can hardly be less than twelve feet wide and with our walls and partitions these dimensions result in a total width of thirty-two feet. The rooms could be exactly square, making the house exactly square, but the effect and the practical accommodation would be disappointing. Without experience it may seem that one foot in the whole width of a building, more or less, is a small matter; but when the difference is seen between a passage three feet six inches wide and one that is four feet

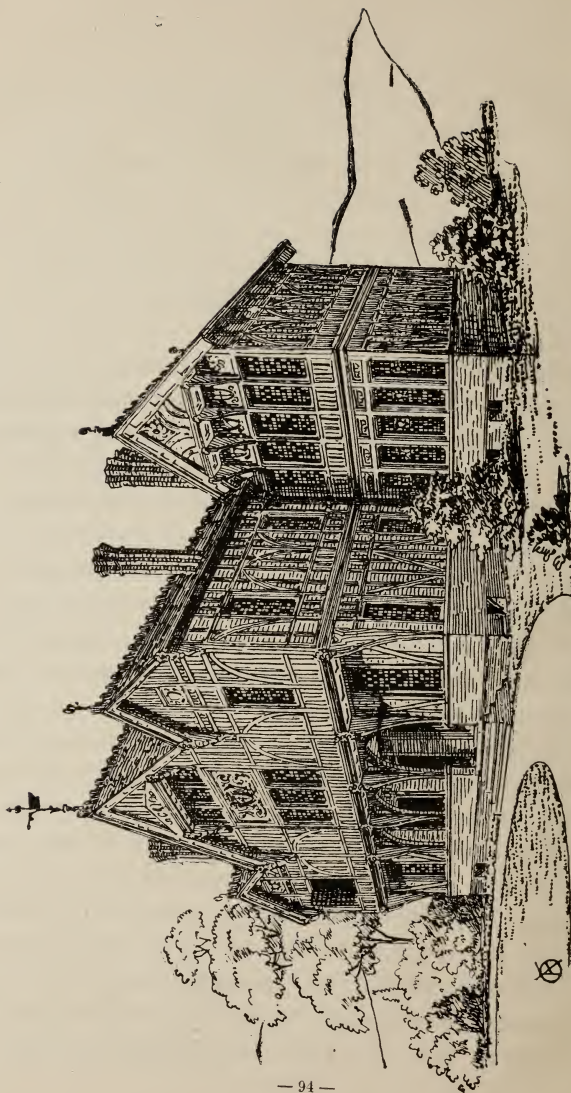
wide it is evident that six inches is a very serious loss or gain. In a stairway a matter of two inches is a serious matter and may cause a great deal of trouble before a satisfactory compromise can be effected. A house has not only a skeleton that must be properly knit together but a nervous system that is easily upset by thoughtless persons. An apparently slight change from the original plan in some particular causes serious trouble and unexpected disintegration in several others unless the change happens to be in the way of simplification, in such case it is proof that the original plan was not fully digested and worked out.

One of the great differences between wood construction and brick or stone consists in the ease with which a wooden building can be altered which is another way of saying carelessly built. No very serious structural results follow from the centers being a good deal out of line and as far as any resulting discrepancies in the shape of the rooms are concerned, a little "furring" will bring things square again. It is one thing to make a thoroughly conscientious set of plans for a building and quite another to get them carried out. The temptation offered wherever a substitution, not to say an omission, will save money without being at once apparent is often too strong for human nature, especially for the kind that thinks lightly of all esthetic considerations.

## CHAPTER VIII.

IN THESE FEW CHAPTERS we have tried to enumerate, rather than discuss, the principal considerations involved in the planning of moderate dwelling houses; with the idea of reminding those interested of some things experience has taught us, and which are sometimes forgotten or overlooked, and only when it is too late become conspicuous by their absence. We believe that the suggestions we have made will be found as applicable to every house as to those we have used to illustrate them and while we have avoided technical description as far as possible, we have, in the space at command, presented the most essential features of good planning in such a general way as to be readily appreciated. Our first discussion was held in a one-story cottage costing less than \$1,000, and with no very sudden changes of fortune we have come to consider a \$10,000 house as providing little more than the necessities of decent living. After all, each man knows or thinks he knows the kind of house he wants, and if we have thus far been too modest to meet his



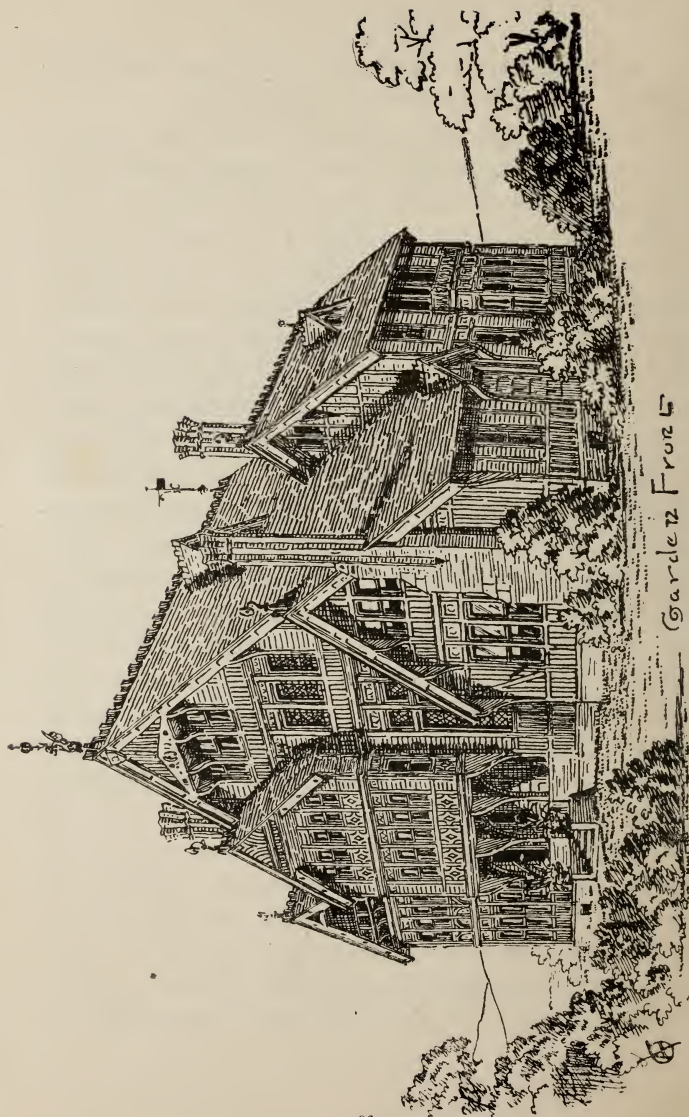


No 14.

Carriage House

views we shall try to make up for our parsimony in this our last opportunity for the present.

The largest houses in the old world are more a collection of buildings of various designs, added from time to time by as many owners and occupants; and while these piles have a charm of their own it is one that can hardly be manufactured. The original house was nothing more than a large hall in which cooking as well as eating and everything else was done, with two or three private rooms at one end for the more important persons. As life became more complicated, wings were added with very little idea of symmetry or proportion, and the picturesque effects we admire, and often try to reproduce artificially, were the results of accident more than design, though none the less beautiful, for that reason, rather we think more beautiful because a growth that strives to keep pace with the growing needs of civilized life is as much a work of nature as a flower. Without creating difficulties, in order to show ingenuity in overcoming them we have tried to preserve in the accompanying sketches of No. 14 something of the character of an old country house of the sixteenth century on a comparatively small scale. A house that could be simply finished for little more than \$20,000 but which with the characteristic paneled wainscotings in oak and "open timbered" ceilings, "together with all forms, modes, shows and signs" of the old manor house could be



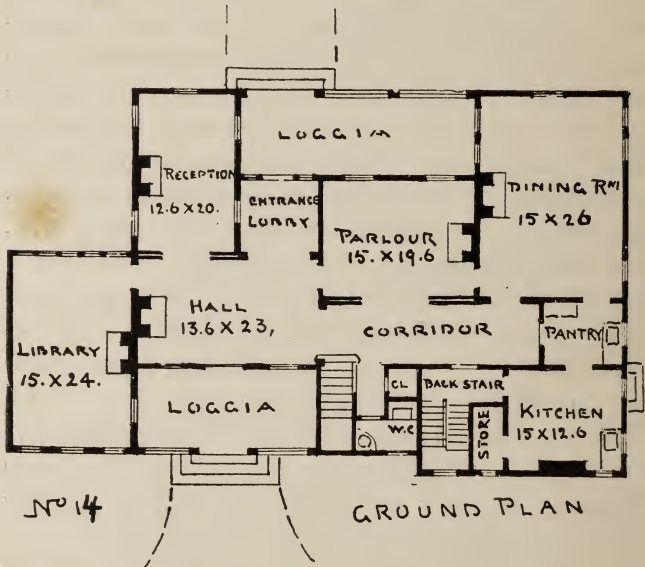
Garden Front

N<sup>o</sup> 14.

very costly indeed. Curious carvings abound in such interiors ; all the details even to the chairs and tables seem to be the accumulations of many eventful lives. Our modern windows with their expanse of clear-plate glass are perhaps more cheerful and better to look through, but they have a wide awake recent air that is not in keeping with an old manor house. The mild climate of California affords every good reason for readopting the old casement window hung like a door and opening outward, so that the whole window may be open instead of only half as in the usual double-hung sashes. Another advantage of casements is in the facility of grouping windows almost wherever and however we may prefer. Without the limitations imposed by the weight boxings or pockets that make our mullions so unavoidably clumsy. For all windows opening on verandas the English casement opening outward is much better for every reason than the French windows opening inward; because the casement can be made absolutely weather tight and the French window cannot, to say nothing of the difficulty of properly hanging curtains over a French window unless the thickness of the wall is so great as to accommodate the swing of the window without reaching the line of the room, and this is out of the question in any ordinary house. Whether in any window there is an advantage in inside shutters without a boxing to fold them back into is a question.



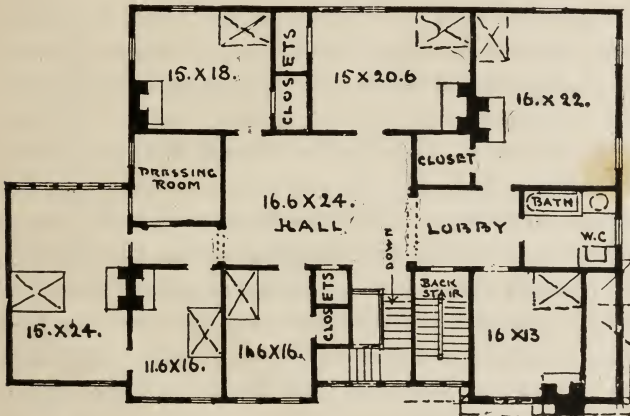
Where we cannot afford the loss of room to “furr out” to accommodate shutter boxings, the shutters are continually in the way unless closed, and frustrate any attempt to use draperies. Venetian blinds of long adjustable slats across the window



and guided up and down by a channel or groove on either side have some merits, but their action and effect is much the same as the ordinary rolling window shade. Outside blinds are not necessarily unsightly, and can be controlled easily from within by the latest inventions, one attachment enabling



the two leaves as one, to be used as an awning or as ordinary shutters at will merely by using a lever that requires very little force. We think the dispositions on the plans of No. 14 require little explanation, in the light of all we have already said as reasons that govern us in determining convenience and effect.



No 14.

SECOND FLOOR

Here is a house that is capable of any degree of expansion even to twice its size with no sacrifice of convenience or artistic design provided, of course, that the additions are made in the spirit of the existing building. If we wished, for instance, to increase this plan for a country hotel, we should make no further additions in a straight line but rather at right angles to enclose three sides of a

court, the longest side being the garden front shown in the cut. In such case what is now the kitchens, pantries, etc., would be added to the dining-room and the servants' department accommodated in the adjacent new wing. Such a pile would still have all the characteristics of a large country house, suitable to the needs of a family who like to entertain on a generous scale. If one's house is at times filled with guests it is not so much their numbers beyond a certain point as the various occupations that make many rooms desirable on the ground floor. A formal reception room, an equally formal drawing room, and a large dining-room are what one may call the official necessities. The morning parlor for casual informal gathering, the breakfast room, the library, the billiard room and smoking room are the comfortable resources of idleness and to these must be added a study or business room to which the host may escape to have an eye to his private affairs without interruptions.

When we consider the still further requirements of the servants' department, the necessary staircases, lavatories and passage ways to make the most of such a household, it will be admitted that good planning involves some study of a great many different ideas. It will not do to arbitrarily call this room a parlor and that a library, the means of ingress and egress, the relative position of the rest of the plan together with the available spaces for the necessary furniture.

the light in quantity and quality and direction, as well as the relative size of the room are all matters that must determine what the room is best suited for and for what purpose it will ultimately be used whatever name we may give it in the design. To discuss even cursorily the many considerations enumerated in the last sentence would exhaust our space if we still had three times what remains but we will say one important thing : that every room for what purpose so ever designed, should have an entrance from a hall or passage, whether it be connected with other rooms or not. When a room can be reached only by passing through another, one of two things inevitably follows : if the inner room is the better and more cheerful, the outer one becomes a mere ante-room or passage to it and ceases to be used as a room at all ; or if the outer room is the desirable one, the inner becomes a mere alcove to it, and an inconvenient alcove at that, from which there is no escape but by the windows. If it is desirable to make a room private, it should be at the end of a passage with another door opening to another passage or hall.

We know a literary gentleman who built a cupola on the roof of his house into which he climbs by a ladder through a trapdoor in the floor, and when in, placed his chair on the trapdoor ; but he confesses that he has more than once climbed down by the fire escape to avoid importunate summonses by raps

on the underside of his trapdoor, and now he makes the best of bad light in his basement, as the only place at once out of the line of interruptions and from which he can escape by two doors. Jonathan Edwards wrote his work on the mind in a board closet six feet square in his kitchen, but he is dead.

The difficulty of such a discussion as this is to determine the space we can afford to each question that arises, to treat any particular question of practical or artistic importance with anything like its value, in relation to the whole question of house building, would have made these short articles into long treatises, perhaps without accomplishing the object we have aimed at. We have brought to our undertaking the experience that can be gained by any intelligent person who cares enough for the subject to devote at least twenty-five years to the study of it. We have tried in a casual way to give our readers a few of the conclusions such study must arrive at.

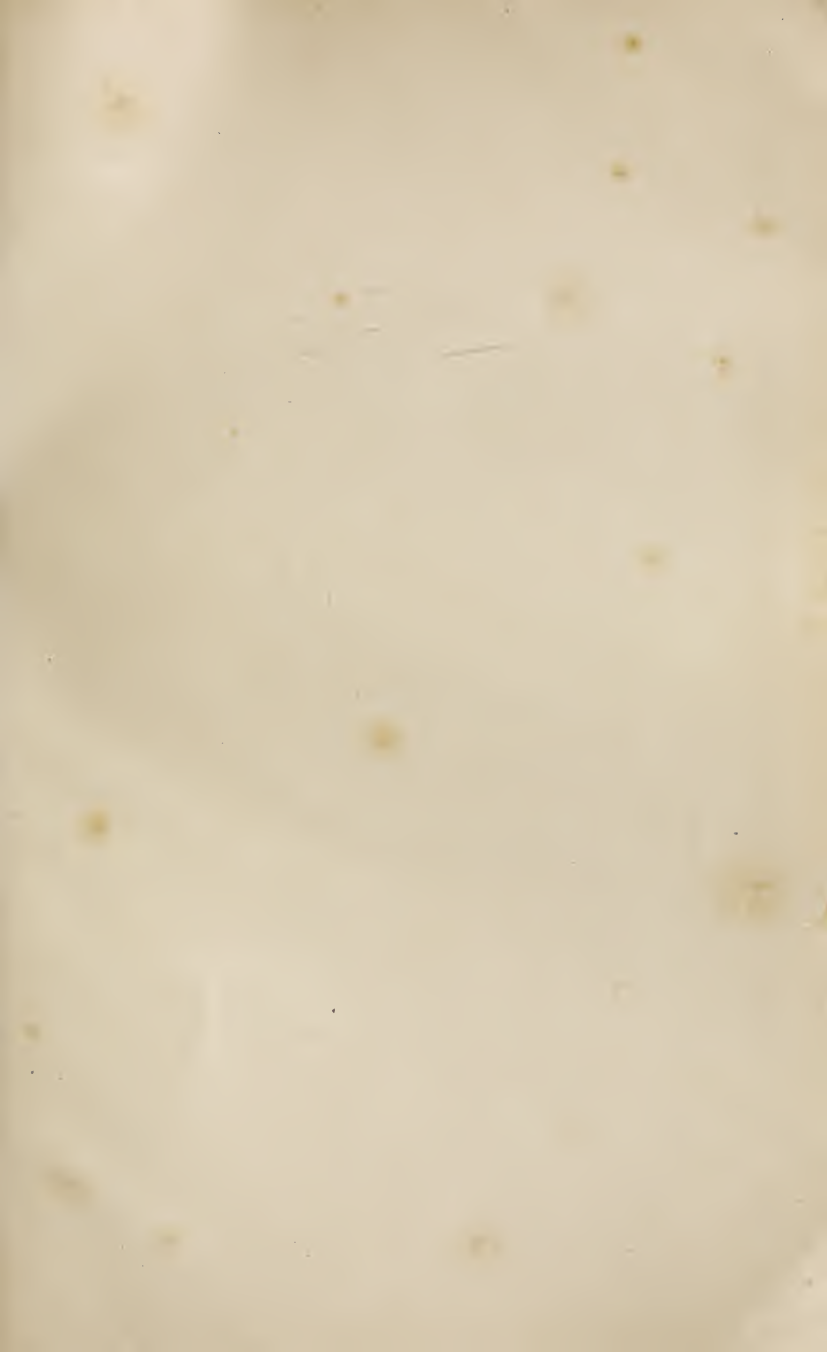




OFFICES OF THE PACIFIC STATES SAVINGS BANK & BUILDING COMPANY  
410 FINE ST. SAN FRANCISCO CAL.





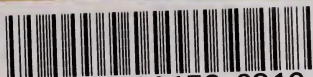












3 1197 00158 6319

